

Jordan Times

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U.N. surveys Gazans stranded in Kuwait

KUWAIT (AP) — A United Nations team is assessing the situation of thousands of Gaza Strip Palestinians with Egyptian travel documents stranded in Kuwait, a team representative said Sunday. Lex Takkenberg of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) estimated that up to 7,000 Palestinians with Egyptian documents are living in Kuwait without residency permits. The number of Palestinians living in the emirate dropped from 450,000 before the Aug. 2, 1990 invasion to 10,000 today. Most were driven out after liberation for allegedly siding with Iraqi occupiers. Palestinians who held Jordanian passports returned there, while those with Lebanese or Syrian documents also were able to emigrate. But those holding Egyptian travel documents, most of whom have lived in Kuwait for most of their lives, are not allowed into Egypt. Western embassies have denied them visas for lack of valid residency in Kuwait. The only countries that welcome them are Iraq, Sudan and Yemen. A deadline for acquiring residency permits expires Saturday.

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Syria rejects Israeli threat

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria, which is said by Israel to have obtained Scud missiles, accused the Jewish state on Sunday of launching a "sick" campaign against it. Al Baath, the daily newspaper of the ruling party, said Syria would not bow to threats and would maintain its position in "preserving rights of the nation." Damascus has made no explicit comment on Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's statement during a visit to the United States that Syria recently tested Scud-C missiles bought from North Korea. But the Al Baath editorial was clearly referring to Israeli Deputy Defence Minister Mordechai Gur's statement on Thursday that "the Syrians must take into account that as soon as they launch a missile against us, we can move to Damascus."

Arafat meets Algeria's head of state

ALGIERS (R) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat had talks in Algiers on Sunday with Algerian head of state Ali Kafi, state radio reported. The radio gave no indication of the reason for the visit. The PLO leader is a frequent visitor to Algiers. Sunday's visit was his first since the funeral of assassinated President Mohammad Boudiaf on July 4.

U.N. envoy in Tripoli

NICOSIA (R) — A senior U.N. official arrived in Tripoli on Sunday to try to get Libya to comply with Security Council demands for the surrender of two men accused of bombing Pan-Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. The Libyan news agency JANA quoted Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Petrovsky as expressing hope to find a "quick solution to the Lockerbie crisis." U.N. sources said on Friday Mr. Petrovsky would deliver a personal letter from Secretary-General Boutros Ghali to Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi.

Peres to visit Moscow this week

TEL AVIV (AP) — Foreign Minister Shimon Peres is scheduled to leave later this week for a two-day official visit to Moscow, the foreign ministry said Sunday. Mr. Peres is expected to sign a memorandum of understanding with Russia for increased cooperation in the areas of commerce, culture and tourism, a foreign ministry spokesman said. The visit is scheduled for Aug. 20 and 21. It is unclear whether Mr. Peres, who was invited to Moscow by Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, will meet with President Boris Yeltsin.

Policeman shot dead in Algeria

ALGIERS (R) — Gunmen shot dead a policeman in the eastern Algerian town of Constantine on Sunday morning when he stopped his car at traffic lights on his way to work, the official news agency APS reported. Ali Zouane, 53, was the third policeman killed in Constantine since July 20. More than 100 members of the security forces, most of them policemen, have been killed since the imposition of a state of emergency on Feb. 9.

India, Pakistan to break ice on Kashmir dispute

NEW DELHI (R) — A senior Pakistani official arrived in New Delhi on Sunday for talks which he said would focus on current tension with India over the disputed Kashmir region. The United Nations of India (UNI) news agency quoted Pakistani Foreign Secretary Shahryar Khan, Islamabad's highest ranking diplomat, as saying he would discuss the Kashmir issue with his Indian counterpart Jyotindra Nath Dixit. Mr. Khan said the two countries "may have diametrically opposite views (on Kashmir) but where there is a will there is a way." Mr. Dixit said: "We share (Mr. Khan's) sentiments that we should have meaningful and serious discussions on all issues."

U.S. said planning to 'provoke confrontation' with Baghdad today

Combined agency dispatches

THE UNITED STATES and key allies have "decided to provoke a confrontation" with Iraq on Monday if Baghdad rebuffs new United Nations attempts to inspect military ministries and installations, the New York Times reported Saturday night. The newspaper quoted an unidentified American official as saying the showdown would serve as the pretext for military action "to help get the president reelected." Campaign and administration officials called the report "hilarious." "That is unbelievable — that is total trash," Bush campaign political director Mark Malan said of the assertion that the president would take such action for political gain. The Times said that if U.N. demands for inspections were rebuffed by Iraq, the administration had selected nine targets and was prepared to bomb them, one after another. The first target, the newspaper said, would be the Ministry of Military Industrialisation in Baghdad. Secretary of Defence Dick Cheney, speaking at a veteran's

banquet in Seattle, said that if there was an impending bombing plan he was "the last one to know about it." Mr. Cheney also told Seattle's King-TV that officials never talk about the alert status of the U.S. military, but added: "I really would want to discourage people from the notion that there's an imminent military strike planned for the next few days." NBC News reported that the U.S. Air Force has secretly moved air warfare staff to Saudi Arabia so it can launch air strikes throughout Iraq if necessary. Lieutenant General Michael Nelson took 300 air warfare experts from Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina to Riyadh on Thursday and began setting up operations at noon on Friday, according to the report on the NBC's "Today" television show. Their mission was to prepare to shoot down Iraqi aircraft flying against Shi'ite rebels in the southern third of Iraq, senior military sources told NBC. The United States also wanted to be prepared to launch air strikes throughout Iraq if U.N. inspectors were prevented once again from entering sensitive Ira-

qi ministry buildings, the Pentagon sources were quoted as saying. "Nothing is imminent. We just want to be ready within 24 hours the next time Iraq dangles us and violates the U.N. resolutions," one Pentagon official told NBC. In Washington, an administration official told the AP that the United States was talking to key allies about plans to react "swiftly and decisively" if Iraq turns down a new U.N. request to inspect facilities believed to hold evidence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. "We've had planning discussions, to ensure Iraq respects the (United Nations) resolutions," he said. He and other officials said the United States was consulting Britain, France and other Gulf war allies. On Sunday, the French Foreign Ministry refused to comment on the newspaper report. A ministry spokesman, speaking to the AP on condition of anonymity, reiterated that France, Britain and the United States have been consulting since

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Jordan reserves decision on reported Palestinian bid to delay Aug. 24 talks

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter with agency dispatches

AMMAN — Jordan has not been formally notified of any Palestinian quest to delay the next round of Arab-Israeli peace talks and the Kingdom would make its own decision only after being informed of the Palestinian position, the head of the Jordanian delegation to the talks said Monday. "We have not been informed of the Palestinian position apart from what we have read in the newspapers," Dr. Majali said. "Once the Palestinians make up their mind and inform us we would reflect on it and make a decision," he told the Jordan Times. Nabil Shaath, a close adviser to Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and a behind-the-scenes guide of the Palestinian delega-

tion to the peace talks, said Saturday that the Palestinians reserved the option to seek a delay in the next round of talks, scheduled to begin in Washington on Aug. 24. Dr. Shaath cited the ambiguity surrounding the recent American agreement to grant \$10 billion in loan guarantees to Israel — whether or not it was contingent on a total freeze on the Jewish state's settlement activities in the occupied territories — as the reason behind the Palestinian position. Dr. Majali declined to go into the Jordanian stand vis-a-vis the loan guarantees. Officials have said that Jordan was awaiting details of the guarantees and under which conditions they would be granted to Israel before passing judgement. Yasser Abed Rabbo, a member of the PLO Executive Committee, said in Tunis Sunday that American clarifications on the loan guarantees were insufficient

and that the organisation had called the Palestinian negotiators to Tunis to discuss the issue. "The U.S. clarifications are insufficient," Mr. Abed Rabbo was quoted as saying by Reuters. "There were positive words which are not linked to precise steps nor guarantees." The clarifications were provided to Palestinian negotiators at a meeting with the U.S. consul in Jerusalem, Molly Williamson. Palestinian sources have expressed alarm over an assertion by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who clinched the loan guarantee deal with U.S. President George Bush last week, that Mr. Bush understood that there would not be a total freeze in settlements in return for the loan guarantees. Al Tayeh Abdul Rahim, the Palestinian ambassador to Jordan, told Reuters Saturday that

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Rabin faces cabinet opposition to settlements

TEL AVIV (AP) — Left-wing members of the Israeli cabinet expressed opposition Sunday to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's commitment to complete building on 11,000 housing units in the occupied territories. The continued construction "could endanger the peace process," said Immigration Minister Yair Tsaban, one of three members of the left-wing Meretz bloc in the cabinet. But Aryeh Deri, a minister to Mr. Rabin's right, said he was "happy" with the commitment, a sign that Mr. Rabin has managed to assuage right-wing criticism following his trip to the United States. Mr. Rabin, on his return Friday, answered right-wing critics by saying the government still would complete 10,000 to 11,000 housing units in the occupied territories, despite an effort to cut back construction. During Mr. Rabin's visit, President George Bush agreed to back \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees to help absorb a wave of Jewish immigrants from former Soviet states. The United States had made the guarantees conditions on a settlement freeze, but Mr. Rabin said that the Americans accepted Mr. Rabin's commitment to complete the units started by the previous, hard-line government led by Yitzhak Shamir. Mr. Rabin said his government would not have started the more than 10,000 units and has drop-

ped plans for more than 5,000 other units approved by the Shamir government. Interior Minister Deri, who criticised the government last week as giving in too easily to American demands, said Sunday that he was happy with the results. "Rabin walked proud in the U.S.," said Mr. Deri, the leader of the ultra religious Shas Party who has defined himself as the "right-wing" of the government representing settler interests. In addition to the 11,000 units, Mr. Deri said the government would continue to build on confrontation lines along the Jordanian and Syrian borders. Mr. Deri also said that Mr. Rabin had slammed left-wing ministers in Sunday's weekly cabinet meeting for being too hasty in promoting an amendment to a law that would permit Israelis to meet Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) members. In a related development, Justice Minister David Libai was reported by the Hebrew daily Haaretz on Sunday to be conducting a campaign to cancel expulsion orders against 11 Palestinians. The report said Mr. Libai considers expulsions to be against international law and merely provocative. The Palestinians have appealed expulsion orders to the supreme court. They were ordered expelled last January.

Bosnia relief convoy turned back

ZAGREB (R) — United Nations forces Sunday rescued a U.N. aid convoy that braved fighting to deliver food to the besieged Bosnian town of Gorazde only to find prisoners to landmines on its way home. The high-risk aid mission, which brought relief to Gorazde after four months of isolation from the outside world, headed back towards the Bosnian capital Sarajevo on Sunday evening after a fraught two-day trip through the war zone. "We know of no problems, but until they are back in Sarajevo, there is concern," said Ron Redmond, spokesman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). He said neither side in the fighting — which pits Muslims and Croats against rebel Serb forces — had cooperated to remove the mines and let the aid convoy go on its way. Reuters correspondents in Serb-held northern Bosnia reported an atmosphere of terror as Muslims seek to flee an "ethnic cleansing" campaign they say aims to rid Bosnia of non-Serbs. "The dimensions of the problem are much greater than most foreigners imagine," according to Richard Holbrook, heading a

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King leaves today for check-ups in U.S.

AMMAN (J.T.) — King Hussein will leave for the United States Monday to undergo more medical examinations for urinary tract bleeding, the Royal Court announced Sunday. The announcement said King Hussein will "undergo more medical examinations in one of the specialised and advanced medical centres." It did not specify where the King will be treated but said the move was recommended by King Hussein's physicians. "The Royal Court announces that the health situation of His Majesty King Hussein is good and stable," it said. The statement voiced deep gra-

titude and appreciation to Jordanians for their feelings of affection towards the King. Earlier, King Hussein's physician, Samir Faraj, said in an interview that the monarch remained under medical observation for bleeding in urinary passages. King Hussein has had a similarly irregular heart beat several times and regularly sees a cardiologist in London. He often looked haggard during the Gulf crisis, which at times threatened to engulf Jordan. But he has since looked healthy and relaxed in his public appearances. Another Jordanian official said that while in the United States the King was expected to see President George Bush. "The King is in excellent

shape," one Jordanian in close contact with him told Reuters. "It is just better to always take maximum care and to double-check things, especially when one gets older," he added. King Hussein has had a similarly irregular heart beat several times and regularly sees a cardiologist in London. He often looked haggard during the Gulf crisis, which at times threatened to engulf Jordan. But he has since looked healthy and relaxed in his public appearances. Another Jordanian official said that while in the United States the King was expected to see President George Bush. "The King is in excellent

King Hussein was last admitted to hospital in January for a minor operation on his right leg. In June last year he was treated for an irregular heart beat which his doctors attributed to exhaustion. The King, who has been head of state longer than any other ruler in the Middle East, celebrated the 40th anniversary of his accession to the throne last Tuesday. His health forced him to cancel plans to fly to Oman on Saturday to offer Sultan Qaboos Ben Sa'id condolences on the death of his mother. He sent Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker to Muscat instead.

Sharif Zeid outlines administrative reform action, promises tighter control

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker announced Sunday that he had instructed the concerned authorities to conduct a full study of a report submitted to the Lower House of Parliament about violations of bureau regulations by a number of government departments. The study will help finalise recommendations that would be put into force, he said. Proper administrative and legal action will be taken in order to address financial irregularities and administrative excesses to prevent any recurrence, said the prime minister in an address to the Lower House session. The government will study deputies' recommendations concerning the handling of this issue in a manner that would reflect positively on the performance of public administration in Jordan,

he said. Sharif Zeid was addressing a session dedicated to discussing a report by a special House committee based on another by the Audit Bureau which said that a number of government departments owe the Finance Ministry JD531 million. Four sessions had dealt with the 1989-1990 Audit Bureau report, during which more than 30 departments called for stricter control over government finances. Sharif Zeid said Sunday the government supported the parliamentary committee's views about the weaknesses in the financial control system in government departments and had instructed these departments to create inspection teams and put an end to further excesses. "The government also supports that committee's recommenda-

tion on stricter control of the administrative aspects of these departments and has decided to establish a special body to be in charge of control and inspection and entrusted the legislative council to enact regulations for the work of this body, the prime minister said. He said the government shares the committee's views calling for a study and assessment of the policy adopted in the process of providing supplies for these departments with a view to introducing a modern system. Immediate action will be taken to control the warehouses system and to modernise the process of registering inventory, he said. The prime minister said that he shares the committee's views about the need to stimulate the work of collection of dues and taxes for the treasury and munici-

palities and promises Parliament he would take all the necessary legislative and organisational measures to ensure the best and most guaranteed protection for public funds. With reference to a proposal for creating a unit to take charge of maintaining government-owned vehicles, the prime minister said that this would be studied in full before further action can be taken. Sharif Zeid referred to a proposal by deputies to establish a central information system and said that the government had already taken the decision in this matter and the creation of the system was in the process. He assured the House that the government was seriously pursuing all efforts to transform poli-

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Mohammad Al Adwan
Adwan to head Royal Protocol

AMMAN (Peta) — A Royal decree was issued Sunday appointing Dr. Mohammad Al Adwan as head of the Royal Protocol. Dr. Adwan has served as Jordan's ambassador to Russia, Poland, Finland, the Commonwealth of Independent States and Spain. Earlier, he served as director of Her Majesty Queen Noor's Office and deputy director of the Jordan Valley Authority.

Jordan hopes for new Israeli logic, approach in bilaterals

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan is going to the sixth round of Arab-Israeli bilateral talks with hopes that the negotiations could now focus on ways and means to implement U.N. resolutions, Jordanian delegates said Sunday. "We now hope that the talks will tackle practical issues of implementing U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338," said Dr. Abdul Salam Majali, head of the Jordanian delegation. "We have presented our position during the last round of talks and these issues have to be taken up in the next round," he told the Jordan Times. Faysel Tarawneh, senior delegate to the bilateral talks and spokesman for the multilateral phase, said three issues figured high in the realm of the Jordanian-Israeli track in the bilateral: Jordanian territory occupied by Israel, water resources and refugees. "These are not related to 'confidence-building measures' such as what Jordan is seeking is based on U.N. resolutions, the

U.N. charter, international legitimacy and laws and conventions," Dr. Tarawneh said. The principles of these demands are not negotiable, only the "ways and means" to implement them, he added. "It is our hope that the Israeli side will come to the talks with a new logic" which will be conducive to reaching agreements compared with the stalling tactics adopted by the Israelis during the previous talks held when the hardline Likud government of Yitzhak Shamir was in power, Dr. Tarawneh said. "There is anticipation and hope... that the new Israeli leadership (headed by Prime Minister Yitzhak) Rabin will be more forthcoming vis-a-vis the principles and terms of reference of the peace process — 242 and 338," he added. "We hope to see a new Israeli logic and approach..." Dr. Tarawneh noted that two of the issues on the bilateral Jordanian-Israeli track — water resources and refugees — "with the multilateral phase, and pointed out that certain aspect of the subjects directly concern Jor-

dan and Israel and therefore should and would be discussed in the bilateral track. Munther Haddadin, Jordan's top expert on water resources and a member of the Kingdom's negotiating team, expressed hope that an elusive Jordanian-Israeli agreement on a "common agenda" would be reached in the sixth round of talks, now scheduled to begin in Washington on Aug. 24. "We could not reach agreement on a common agenda" during the previous rounds, and once this has been sorted out in the next round, "we can take item by item and proceed with discussing practical ways and means to implement the related U.N. resolutions," Dr. Haddadin said. "I cannot say which issue will be given priority," he said. "All issues are equally important." Jordan will table several working papers during the talks, he said. "Jordan will never run out of ideas," he added, but did not elaborate on specifics. However, all ideas presented by Jordanians "will be within a framework for a comprehensive

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House gets ahead with passing law on press

By Abdullah Hasanat and Suhair Obeidat
Jordan Times Staff Reporters

AMMAN — After a lively two-hour debate, the Lower House of Parliament Sunday approved another four articles of the press and publications draft law. In two earlier sessions the lawmakers worked their way through nine of the 59 articles. One of the articles that was a point of contention in the session was Article 10, which stipulates that the journalist "strictly adheres to the ethics of the profession with regard to the respect of individuals' rights, their constitutional freedoms and the protection of their private life." The House's Law Committee had proposed that this article be abolished together with other attached sub-articles, but the government vigorously fought for and won its ratification. Amman Deputy Fakhr Kassar, a journalist himself, questioned the applicability of the article. "I

do not know exactly what the ethics of the profession are," he said. "There is no list describing such ethics." He said that objectivity, accuracy and honesty — which the article also requires of journalists — are vague words and have no definitions. He argued that such vagueness would create a loop-hole which future governments can use to persecute journalists. Minister of Information Mahmoud Sharif countered that to the charter of ethics for journalists, which, he said, was endorsed by the Arab League and expressed his view that Article 10 must be part of the press and publications law. Mr. Sharif then pointed out to the charter of ethics for journalists, which, he said, was endorsed by the Arab League and expressed his view that Article 10 must be part of the press and publications law.

Somalia aid gathers pace

NAIROBI (Agencies) — International efforts to save Somalia's famished population gathered momentum Sunday with emergency United Nations food airlifts and news that a U.S. military team was on its way to run more relief flights. A U.S. embassy spokesman told Reuters the team was expected in the Kenyan port of Mombasa on Monday to set up supply routes into the war-torn Horn of Africa country, where 1.5 million people are at immediate risk of starving to death. He said airlifts could start as

early as Aug. 24 following a White House announcement last Friday that Washington would send 145,000 tonnes of extra food to help ease the world's worst humanitarian crisis. Experienced relief workers say the Somali crisis is worse than the Ethiopian drought of the mid-1980s, in which the estimated death toll ranged from 200,000 and one million. "It's very scary — you've got so many (rival) groups operating on their own account. No where else in the world have you

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Kuwaiti minister urges closer ties with Iran

NICOSIA (R) — Kuwait's interior minister, highlighting the shakiness in regional loyalties triggered by Iraq's 1990 invasion of the emirate, called during a visit to Tehran for closer ties between Iran and its Gulf neighbours.

Sheikh Ahmad Hamoud Al Jaber Al Sabah, quoted by Iran's IRNA news agency on Sunday, said all obstacles to cordial ties between the two near neighbours should be removed.

"Presently, the existence of a common enemy requires that a more solid and closer relation be established between the two countries," he told Iranian Interior Minister Abdollah Nouri on Saturday. "We hope that all the regional states, in cooperation with you, will have cordial and solid relations."

Kuwait and Iran's other Gulf neighbours, fearing the spread of the 1979 Iranian Islamic revolution, supported Iraq during its 1980-1988 war with Tehran. Iran remained "neutral" during the seven-month Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and while a U.S.-led multinational coalition ejected Iraqi troops from the emirate in January and February last year.

Mr. Nouri, quoted by IRNA, said Iran had been cast in the role of the regional villain by its enemies.

"With the passage of time, the Persian Gulf war in particular,

and the positions adopted by the Islamic Republic, it became clear that Iran is looking after nothing but cordial relations with the regional countries and defending the rights of the regional states," he added.

Sheikh Ahmad, who arrived on Saturday on a four-day official visit, agreed in a first round of talks to set up a joint commission to examine ways of fighting drug trafficking.

Noting that Iran and Kuwait had religion and oil in common, Sheikh Ahmad said further talks and exchanges of visits would increase scope for cooperation.

Mr. Nouri called for increased cooperation.

"The two countries can cooperate in regional issues and implementation of joint plans in economic, industrial and cultural fields."

He said Iran was ready to cooperate with Kuwait in controlling borders, combating drug-trafficking and by exchanging information between border guards.

Kuwaiti Information Minister Badr Jassim Al Yaqub also arrived in Iran on Saturday for a four-day visit.

IRNA said Mr. Yaqub, who will sign a cooperation agreement, brought a message from Kuwait's emir thanking Iran for its stance during the Gulf war.

Kuwait to pay \$77m in compensation to employees

KUWAIT (AP) — Kuwaitis working in the private sector will receive compensation totalling 22 million dinars (\$77 million) for loss of income during the Iraqi occupation, an official was quoted Sunday as saying.

Fahd Al Rajaan, director-general of Public Authority for Social Security, told the daily Sawt Al Kuwait the first payments for those who were members of the social security plan before the Aug. 2, 1990 invasion would be made this week.

After liberation of the oil-rich emirate Feb. 26, 1991 by the U.S.-led coalition, Kuwaiti civil servants were paid their back salaries for the seven months of occupation. The government employs about 80 per cent of the Kuwaiti-National work force.

Every Kuwaiti who stayed during the occupation was given a 500-dinar (\$1,750) grant after liberation.

Independent Kuwait economists have warned that the coun-

try's finances will lapse into a chronic deficit if the government continues to dole out money.

The current budget deficit exceeds \$6 billion.

Finance Minister Nasser Al Rowdan recently said the Kuwaiti government spent more than \$40 billion during the occupation and after liberation, mostly from liquidated overseas investments.

For the first time in its history, Kuwait borrowed \$5.5 billion last December.

Kuwait is producing 1.3 million barrels of oil a day, and is expected to reach its pre-invasion output of 1.5 million barrels a day by the end of the year.

The emirate is expected to claim more than \$100 billion in war damages from Iraq through the United Nations. Iraq still has not agreed to a Security Council plan allowing it to sell \$1.6 billion worth of oil, with some of the revenues to be used by the United Nations to pay compensation.

Hekmatyar vows to fight on

KABUL (R) — Renegade Mujahideen chief Gulbuddin Hekmatyar vowed on Saturday to continue his attacks on the Afghan capital until his demands are met.

"Peace in the country could return only after the notorious militia is expelled from Kabul city and all the communists' armed units disbanded and disarmed," Mr. Hekmatyar said.

Most U.N. staff withdrew from the Afghan capital as more rockets pounded residential areas on Sunday.

Only seven staffers remained in the city after three carloads headed towards the northern town of Mazar-e-Sharif, U.N. officials said.

Tens of thousands of Afghans were fleeing north. Several thousand who tried to head east have taken shelter instead in the notorious Pul-e-Charkhi prison on the city outskirts.

In a statement carried by the Pakistan-based Afghan News Agency, Mr. Hekmatyar criticised calls for U.N. intervention in Afghanistan as an invitation to trespass and ruled out peace for Kabul until all former communist militiamen are evicted.

"Military intervention in Afghanistan under any name would be a trespass on the integrity, sovereignty, national freedom and independent status of Afghanistan, the fundamentalist Hezb-e-Islami leader pledged.

Mr. Hekmatyar launched a rocket offensive against Kabul last Monday to back his demands for withdrawal of the militia, whose defection to the Mujahideen guerrillas last April paved the way for their victorious entry into Kabul that month.

Hundreds of civilians have been killed in the rocket attacks. The Red Cross hospital alone

said it admitted 604 people over five days ending on Friday. Of these, 85 had died.

Two members of the ruling leadership council in Kabul and formerly communist Uzbek militia leader General Rashid Dostum asked the United Nations last week to intervene.

Five rockets hit the Russian embassy in the south of the city and spokesman Zmair Kaboulou said the compound had been targeted deliberately. Two Russian staff were killed last week.

Diplomats said they were waiting for guarantees of safety before evacuating.

President Burhanuddin Rabbani told diplomats that he expelled Mr. Hekmatyar last week from the leadership council, an uneasy alliance of at least seven Mujahideen leaders.

Mubarak visits Oman and Kuwait

KUWAIT (R) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak left Kuwait on Sunday after talks with the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, believed to focus on renewed U.S. threats of military action against Iraq.

Gulf-based diplomats said Mr. Mubarak was likely to be urging Egypt's Gulf Arab allies to "let cool heads prevail."

Kuwait's official news agency did not immediately report Mr. Mubarak's supreme visit. He arrived from Oman, where he presented his condolences to its leader, Sultan Qaboos Ben Sa'id, on the death of his mother.

Kuwaiti airport officials said Mr. Mubarak's plane left the emirate after a few hours but it was not clear where he had gone. Earlier, a Kuwaiti official said Mr. Mubarak may head next for Saudi Arabia.

Egypt's Middle East News Agency, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation, quoted Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa as saying the meeting in Kuwait dealt with "the tense situation in the region," a joint security pact agreed last year in Damascus and Arab relations in general.

The New York Times said on Sunday Washington and key Western allies had decided to provoke a confrontation with Iraq on Monday that could lead to renewed bombing in "coming days."

NBC Television reported that the U.S. air force had secretly moved air warfare staff to Saudi Arabia so it could launch strikes throughout Iraq if needed.

Libya setting up version of British SAS — report

LONDON (AP) — Libya is spending millions of dollars to establish its own version of Britain's Special Air Service (SAS), the Sunday Times reported.

In direct contravention of U.N. sanctions, Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi is recruiting disaffected former members of South Africa's special forces to train his commandos, the newspaper said.

"Qaddafi is also seeking to buy large amounts of top-quality military equipment, including a sophisticated radar air defence system, American M-40 anti-tank weapons, and NBC combat suits designed to protect troops against the effects of nuclear, biological or chemical attack," it said.

The newspaper said it had obtained secret documents outlining the deal, negotiated by Saudi Arabian arms dealer Adnan Khashoggi.

"The training proposal, prepared by Handingair, a Khashoggi-controlled company ... offers Libya a team comprised of 'carefully selected former members of the most elite units of the South African defence forces,'" the Sunday Times said.

According to the newspaper, the documents said the men were "drawn from one of the world's most experienced elite fighting units — the South African reconnaissance commandos ... they are members of a private corporation that offers training to legitimate governments and carefully selected clients who have a need for such training."

The Handingair correspond-

ence, it said, "boasts that the South Africans ... have 'all-round combat experience'."

The documents said the course, lasting almost two years, would "create a unit that will have true special forces credibility and will be comparable to the only few special forces units worth mentioning in the world," the newspaper said.

Training would include advanced explosives, combat survival, infiltration and special urban warfare techniques. "The basic cost of the course would be \$2.9 million," it said.

The Sunday Times quoted government sources in Pretoria as saying that if names of the former soldiers became known their passports would be confiscated.

The newspaper said Libya likely would find trainers among former members of the disbanded Civil Cooperation Bureau, a special forces group that murdered anti-apartheid activists in the 1980s. Many had been unable to find work.

Libya denied the report.

"The report was 'wrong and a mere fabrication,' said an official of the Libyan bureau of external communication, the equivalent of the foreign ministry, according to a dispatch from Tripoli carried by the Libyan Jamahiriya News Agency (JANA).

The official also denied the report that Libya was trying to buy large quantities of sophisticated military equipment, according to the agency, monitored in Nicosia.

Iraq seizes executed traders' property

NICOSIA (R) — The Iraqi government has ordered the confiscation of all property and money belonging to traders it executed for profiteering and hoarding, according to documents obtained by Reuters in Cyprus.

The documents — Interior Ministry directives 5146 and 5181 dated July 26 and marked "very confidential, personal and urgent" — ordered Iraq's banks to confiscate the "movable and immovable property of the following criminals ..."

The list names 30 well-known Iraqi traders who were among 42 merchants reported executed after the profiteering crackdown began on July 25.

Diplomats said last week that Iraq ordered the seizure of warehouses and businesses belonging to the executed traders but the Interior Ministry papers show that all property and money owned by most of the merchants was ordered seized.

A directive issued by the Directorate General of Security, number 11417, also dated July 26, orders the banks to freeze the funds of another 10 merchants, some of them among those executed.

Diplomats in Baghdad had said security men rounded up some 600 traders across the country since Iraq began its crackdown on profiteering.

Merchants who fled Iraq during the crackdown and diplomats said the families of the executed traders were barred from public mourning.

They reported fights between mourners and security men at a funeral in Al Kadhimiya just north of Baghdad. They said the government banned the relatives of the executed merchants from holding mourning sessions.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on Thursday confirmed merchants were executed and told Iraqis they did not deserve sympathy for being rounded up from their homes.

Speaking to officials in Babylon province, President Saddam said:

"The poor should know exactly what their interests are and shouldn't side with the rich ... some of the poor even sympathise with traders who exploit them. The same poor people before the execution of the traders were crying and shouting against the traders, asking 'where is the state to protect us?'"

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

OIC chief asks Israel to show good faith

TUNIS (R) — The head of the organisation that speaks for the World's Muslims challenged Israel on Saturday to prove its good faith before the next round of Middle East peace talks on Aug. 24. Organisation of the Islamic Conference Secretary-General Hamid Al Gabid said Israel should start by immediately halting work on Jewish settlement in the occupied territories. "It is necessary for Israel to abide by the international community resolutions and take initiatives to prove its good intentions and its seriousness before the resumption of the bilateral talks," Mr. Gabid said after meeting Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in Tunis. There were no details of his talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation chairman. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin stopped plans to build what his Labour administration calls "political settlements" after winning Israel's general election in June. But he said on Friday on his return from a visit to the United States that work on up to 11,000 houses already under construction in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip was going ahead.

Iranian paper praises expulsion of Britons

NICOSIA (AP) — A hardline Iranian newspaper Sunday praised the Tehran government's order to expel three Britons, the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported. The daily Abar said Saturday's action would enable Iran to keep the upper hand in its for-fat expulsions that began two months ago, said the agency, monitored in Cyprus. The newspaper, which is aligned with opponents of President Hashemi Rafsanjani's opening to the West, said Iran should not be afraid of "the lion" or "the old fox," a reference to Britain. "Iran is the most powerful country in the region, whose tranquility is regarded as the blood vein for the industrial world and the West," Abar wrote. "Therefore, we should employ these elements in exerting our power in the world." Iran ordered the expulsion of the three Britons for "illegal activities," including a British embassy accountant. The order indicated a further worsening in relations between London and Tehran. On Friday, Britain announced it had ordered an Iranian diplomat, First Secretary Ali Rajabi, to leave the country. The move followed the arrest and expulsion in June of Geoffrey Brammer, third secretary at Britain's Tehran embassy. Iran claimed he was a spy. Britain denied it. Britain restored diplomatic relations with Iran in September 1990. They were broken off in 1989 after the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini ordered the killing of British writer Salman Rushdie, saying his novel "Satanic Verses" insulted Muslims.

'British Gulf soldiers had faulty guns'

LONDON (AP) — A secret Ministry of Defence report says British soldiers fighting in the Gulf war "faced the enemy in close combat unsure whether their weapons would fire or stop," the Observer newspaper reported. The Sunday newspaper said it had seen a copy of the report, which revealed Britain's key infantry weapon, the SA80 — standard issue to all British forces — "does not work properly and put the lives of British soldiers at unnecessary risk in the Gulf." A Ministry of Defence spokesman said the ministry was satisfied with the SA80. He said he did not know of such a report, "but I would not be in the business of discussing internal documents if I did know of one." The Observer said the fully automatic 5.56 kilometre weapon, built by Royal Ordnance, jammed frequently during the Gulf war and "suffered from a catalog of faults and design failures." It quoted the report as saying "it is... quite clear that infantrymen did not have confidence in their personal weapon." Problems outlined in the report included triggers that had to be manually flicked back into position, bayonets that fell off in combat and firing pins that broke, the newspaper said. The Observer said the government was understood to have spent more than £200 million (\$385 million) on the weapon, hundreds of thousands of which were in use.

Two quakes jolt southern Iran

NICOSIA (AP) — Two moderately strong earthquakes jolted Iran's southern Bushehr province early Sunday, the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported. There were no reports of casualties or damage. The agency, monitored in Cyprus, said both quakes were centred 830 kilometres south of Tehran and registered 5.3 and 4.2 degrees on the open-ended Richter scale. The Richter scale is a gauge of the energy released by an earthquake, as measured by the ground motion recorded on a seismograph. A quake of magnitude five can cause considerable damage.

U.S. congressman holds talks in Sudan

KHARTOUM (AP) — U.S. Congressman Neryn Dymally said Saturday the United States will continue to help Sudan despite differences between the two countries. They could cooperate in the fields of oil and gold exploration, he said but did not give any details. Sudan excavates a limited amount of oil and gold. The United States cut all economic aid to Sudan in 1989 when Omar Hassan Al Bashir overthrew in a military coup the government of Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi. Relations between the U.S. government and Sudan has been cold, with America accusing the military regime of human rights abuses and supporting "terrorism." Mr. Dymally, who is president of the Foreign Relations Sub-Committee on Africa in the House of Representatives, said Sudanese officials had denied charges of supporting "terrorism" and abusing human rights. He in return told them that the United States will not resume economic and development aid to Sudan until general elections are held. The military government has promised them but set not date. Mr. Dymally said that he would submit his findings to Congress.

Kenya begins crackdown on Somali refugees

NAIROBI (Agencies) — Kenyan police have begun a major crackdown on Somali refugees in the capital and other commercial centres in an operation aimed at curbing escalating crime, government officials said. "Police systematically combed houses, they could not have missed a needle if it had dropped on the ground," said one resident of Eastleigh, a poor residential district in east Nairobi with a dense Somali refugee population. Kenyan police have blamed fugitives fleeing famine and civil war in Somalia for increasing armed crime. They say the refugees bring guns which they use to harass or rob local residents or sell to gangs of bandits. "The weapons the refugees enter this country with could may be those used in violent robberies," a police spokesman said.

Jordan Times
Tel.: 667171

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Gardens Street - opposite Arabian College

Children die as U.N. flies in food to stricken Somali town

BAIDOA, Somalia (R) — Twelve starving children died as the United Nations flew tonnes of emergency food aid to this famished Somali town on Saturday.

Ten more scarecrow-like infants died in three other centres in the hour it took a U.N. transport plane to offload its life-bringing cargo in a town where the hand of death holds sway.

The world has woken up too late for many of the victims of war and famine in this desolate, fly-blown place 250 kilometres northwest of the capital Mogadishu. The only part of town that has seen any growth this year is the graveyard.

"The problem is that we are getting no serious help at the moment, there is little food, few medical supplies, mediocre shelter," said Irish aid worker Anita Ennis of Concern.

"These children have no clothes, no blankets, no mattresses. You can never quite be sure what kills them — there is mass hunger, mass diarrhoea, inadequate medical supplies. It is little

surprise they die like this."

Some boys' rectums had collapsed due to what aid workers said was acute diarrhoea.

At one feeding centre in Baidoba, 3,800 children are crowded in structures of sticks and canvas that can hardly accommodate 500. The lucky ones sleep on canvas supplied by relief workers.

Fourteen-year-old Mohammad lay on flattened milk and biscuit cartons, a similar covering his only protection from the biting cold.

Moved — to tears, an American journalist visiting the centre removed her jacket and cradled the shivering, emaciated boy.

Mr. Ennis said she had given him milk, mineral water and some proteins soon after he was discovered lying by the roadside. His parents had starved to death.

"He was totally dehydrated when we found him. Two drops of tears fell from his eyes, he appeared completely finished. But now I think he will make it," Ms. Ennis said.

"We do not have any warm material in which to cover him," Amina Sheikh-Mohammad, a

Somali relief worker, said Baidoba's children drank water from anywhere and ate food "wherever and whenever they were lucky enough to find any."

She said that even with increased food supplies, the problems would remain until medical supplies, clothing and other essential needs were addressed.

Offers of emergency food aid flow in but aid workers say they need urgent medical supplies and shelter to keep the people alive.

The United States said on Friday it would start flying 145,000 tonnes of food to Somali refugees and drought-hit Kenyans in northern Kenya as soon as possible and was studying the possibility of airifts inside Somalia.

Former colonial power Italy said it was earmarking an extra \$30 million in aid.

Relief workers in Mogadishu say need special food to nurse starving young children, such as porridge and high-protein biscuits, as well as staples like beans, rice and maize, to save 1.5 million people at immediate risk of death, a third of them children.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 73111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 ... Au Claire de la Lune
18:15 ... Le Monde Sans Manteau
18:30 ... News in French
18:45 ... Weekly Sports Magazine
19:00 ... News in Hebrew
19:15 ... News in Arabic
19:30 ... Close to Home
19:45 ... A Perfect Hero
20:00 ... News in English
20:15 ... Strains Family

PRAYER TIMES

06:32 ... Fajr
07:50 ... (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:40 ... Dhuhr
16:19 ... 'Asr
19:24 ... Maghreb
20:46 ... Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 63785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terraviva Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 622541
Anglican Church Tel. 630831, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 713331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 713261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 717151
Assam International Church Tel. 625326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 611265
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 623824, 64952
Church of the Nazarene Tel. 673691.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Normal summer weather will prevail and winds will be northerly to moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly to moderate and seas calm.

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 63785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Khalid Ma'addi 896330
Dr. Waheed Salameh 788285
Dr. Saoud Tawfiq 788285
Dr. Waleed Salameh 779971
Pina pharmacy 691912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Naroukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shameel pharmacy 637650

IRBID:

Dr. Mazen Garabedh (—)
Al-Shera pharmacy (273625)

ZARQA:

Dr. Abdul Karim Khashashneh (—)
Khalifah pharmacy 983417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 691228
Hood Bank 713121
Highway Police 94402
Traffic Police 94402
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 629800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 697467
Complaints 661176
Amman Municipality 767111
Complaints 121
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 731111
Radio Jordan 667100
Water Authority 667100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 667100

HOSPITALS

Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Aila Intl. Airport 08-53200

AMMAN:

Human Medical Centre 813613/32
Khaldil Maternity, J. Amn. 642616
Abdullah Maternity, J. Amn. 642616
Jabal Amman Maternity 642662
Mellor, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsi 6641714
Shamsi Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muhammar Hospital 6672719
The Islamic, Abdull. 6641646
Al-Ahli, Abdull. 6641714
Iskhan, J. Ashrafiah 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafiah 771013
Arzy, Marwa 89161/15
Queen Aila Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Rin Sima Hospital (09)986732
Al-Hilwa Medical Hospital (09)999096
RASH:
Piscina Rama Hospital (02)222553
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)222725
Be Al Nidra Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital (03)34111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (05)5200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

08:15 ... Damascus (RJ)
08:30 ... Jeddah (RJ)
08:45 ... Riyadh (RJ)
09:30 ... Bahrain, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
11:00 ... New Delhi (RJ)
11:00 ... Damascus (RJ)
11:15 ... Beirut (RJ)
11:30 ... Cairo (RJ)
11:45 ... Moscow (RJ)
12:00 ... Dhahran (RJ)
12:15 ... Bahrain, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
12:30 ... New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
12:45 ... Cambridge, Leeds (RJ)
09:45 ... Moscow (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

07:30 ... Aden (AL)
08:30 ... Dubai (EM)
11:15 ... Khartoum (SU)
13:20 ... Moscow, Abu Dhabi, Doha (GF)
14:30 ... Istanbul (TK)
15:30 ... Rome, Beirut (AZ)
20:00 ... Paris, Damascus (AF)
20:30 ... Cairo (MS)

DEPARTURES

Queen opens CPF branch in Karak

KARAK (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor, honorary president of the Cerebral Palsy Foundation (CPF) Sunday inaugurated a CPF branch in Karak which will offer preventive and rehabilitation services to cerebral palsy children in southern regions of Jordan.

The new CPF centre, which started offering its services to the public in May, provides early diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation for cerebral palsy children to develop their physical and mental skills and enable them to become self-reliant, productive members of their community.

The centre which now cares for 106 children, cooperates with the departments of health, social development and education in Karak and with hospitals in the region to disseminate information and public awareness to help parents detect and prevent cerebral palsy, urging to seek treatment and rehabilitation of their children as early as possible.

The CPF decided to open the



The Queen holds a child during her visit to CPF centre in Karak.

covering the cost of furniture and equipment. The centre, however, still lacks equipment which has to be imported from other countries.

The source said that the three doctors working for the CPF are now visiting the centre twice a week to examine and evaluate cases.

The Queen toured the various parts of the new centre and was briefed on the services it offers to the children.

According to CPF President Fakhri Bilbeisi, the Karak centre is the sixth of its kind in Jordan. Amman, Zarqa, Irbid, Salt and Aqaba have similar facilities.

The Queen later visited the Karak hospital to hear a briefing on the services it offers to patients. The Queen also visited the ancient castle of Karak and watched the restoration work on the site.

She was accompanied by Chief Chamberlain Prince Raad Zeid and other officials.

Fire guts paper plant

AMMAN (J.T.) — A huge fire Sunday engulfed the warehouses of the Fine Hygienic Paper Co. Ltd. at Sahab Industrial City near Amman, causing extensive damage but no casualties.

Civil Defence men reported that the fire, which started at 7:00 a.m., came under control in the evening.

The warehouses proprietors were not available to give any estimate of the losses, but informed sources told the Jordan Times that the warehouses have recently been replenished with raw materials and chemicals required for the manufacture of the tissue paper.

According to the Civil Defence Department (CDD), the fire destroyed the contents of the warehouse adjoining the company plant and it was only through strenuous efforts that the CDD firefighters were able to prevent it from extending to the plant which contains the machinery.

The CDD said that water tankers had to be brought in from the armed forces, the Public Security Department, the Amman Municipality and the Water Authority of Jordan in order to help extinguish the fire.

Industrial sources in Amman told the Jordan Times that the Sahab Industrial City lacks sufficient water supplies and its factories have been in the practice of bringing in water by private water tankers.

A huge cloud of smoke rose above the Sahab Industrial City all morning and the afternoon as firefighters were still trying to cool the area, hoping to enter the warehouse by early Monday to investigate the causes of the fire and assess the losses, a CDD officer said.

The CDD reported that the inflammable material caused asphyxiation cases and that some people around the area were taken to hospital for treatment.

Parliament meets in joint session, compromises on political parties draft law

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Upper and Lower houses of Parliament will hold a joint session on Thursday to discuss a number of articles in the draft law on political parties which they had failed to have a full agreement on during their separate sessions.

House Speaker Mr. Ahmad Al Lawzi said Sunday.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Lawzi said the meeting would be held in accordance with article 92 of the Jordanian constitution.

He said the constitution states that "if any of the two houses rejects a draft law twice, while the other accepts it with or without any amendments, both houses will hold a joint session chaired by the speaker of the Senate to discuss the points of contention. The draft law will be endorsed only when it is approved by a two-thirds majority vote of those present in the joint session. Should the two

houses' joint session fail to reach a positive result, the draft law will not be submitted to the joint session for discussion during the same parliamentary term."

After failure to agree on the amendments to the draft law the speakers of the two houses, together with heads of blocs and concerned committees held a joint meeting to try to iron out differences. They reportedly reached agreement on a compromise formula that would settle the points of difference.

In the wake of their meeting, the two sides were reported to have agreed on an amendment proposed by the Senate to article five which will now read "the founding member of a political party should not be affiliated to any non-Jordanian political party or political group."

They also agreed on other points including one related to item (A) of article 18 which will



Abdul Latif Arabiyat



Ahmad Al Lawzi

The two houses, Mr. Lawzi noted, have a deep desire to endorse the political parties law which is vital for opening the door to the creation of political parties and ensuring successful political life and political pluralism in Jordan.

The two sides also approved the Senate's amendments to a number of items in article 21.

political parties, their documents, correspondence and means of communications are protected by law and should not come under any government monitoring or be confiscated.

The two sides also approved the Senate's amendments to a number of items in article 21.

Jordan's first peace movement established

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A group of Jordanian intellectuals have established Jordan's first peace movement which aims at realising peace as a step towards progress and tranquility in the Arab World.

The Jordanian Peace Forum (JPF) is to spread awareness among Jordanians of the necessity for peace and its importance to social, political and economic progress in the region.

Founded in January this year, the JPF membership now totals 60. The forum is headed by Shawkat Obaidat, a columnist at Sawt Al Shaab newspaper. Its main message to Jordanians is simply the call for peace with its reflections on all walks of life. It may also be "the only resort left under the on-going changes of the new world order," according to a JPF leaflet.

"Real progress and economic development can't be achieved without peace," said Farouq Jarrah, the forum's deputy president. "There can never be any unity while war is going on. Our efforts are not solely directed towards political peace but basically towards achieving peace among individuals, through our relationships with each other, before we head for peace between nations."

Mr. Jarrah, who heads research at Al al Beit Foundation, stressed that one of the basic principles of Islam is peace according to the Islamic verse that implies that if an enemy country showed inclinations for peace, the Islamic Umma should be willing to accept.

"The Western media seem to associate Islam always with terrorism," Mr. Jarrah said. "Even the notions of Jihad and martyrdom are greatly associated

with Islam's teachings to Muslims since their childhood. We have to adopt another way of looking at things. It is proved now that all over the world that nothing can be solved through war, we need peace, and that is what we are advocating."

JPF also aims at achieving equality, freedom and calls for tolerance among citizens as well as the right of every individual to live in peace and security.

In the near future its role will be directed towards boosting Jordan's role as an advocate of peace and defender of human rights by strengthening links between Jordan and other countries.

The forum also encourages objective dialogue, and plans to hold debates on current social problems. This will be implemented by establishing relations with academic and scientific institutions as well as intellectuals in the country.



A group of Indian expatriates Sunday hands over a message of peace and a token statue to Iyad Qattan, director of the Royal Cultural Centre, who received them on behalf of the Jordanian leadership (photo by Youssef Al 'Allan).

Indian motorists bring message of peace to Jordan

By Laney Salisbury
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Twelve Indian expatriates from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) arrived in Jordan on the first stop of an 11-nation peace rally road trip from Abu Dhabi to London.

In four Peugeot and Fiat, the expatriates are bearing peace messages and symbolic gold-plated statues of a child in his mother's arms from UAE President Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

At a hand-over ceremony attended by Jordanian and UAE officials on Sunday team leader Farmanwaran Sabash Chandra Bose presented the non-political tokens to Royal Cultural Centre Director Mr. Iyad Qattan, receiving them on behalf of His Majesty King Hussein.

The message read: "Let the love, affection and protection enjoyed by the child in mother's arms be the legacy of all human beings."

But as with many events in the Middle East, politics always slips in.

At Sunday's ceremony, UAE ambassador to Jordan Mr. Mohammad Jaseem Shikri said the "Gulf crisis is a thing of the past," denying the emirates had expelled Jordanians as part of its official post-war policy.

"This is a step for peace for all Arab countries. It is time to return to good relations on the political level," he said.

"On the cultural level," he

added, "relations are very good. But we still need more efforts."

The Indian team had to fly from Abu Dhabi to Jordan, bypassing its scheduled first stop of Saudi Arabia. A team representative said Saudi Arabia had closed its borders to land traffic because of reported military troop movements but added that the team will visit Saudi Arabia on its return trip.

The motorists for peace, however, will drive to Syria from Jordan this Tuesday.

The \$150,000, 25,000 kms peace rally was flagged off by the Indian Ambassador to UAE, Mr. Ranjit Sethi, Aug. 6 from the Volcanic Fountain in Abu Dhabi as part of celebrations marking Sheikh Zayed's accession to the throne 26 years ago.

The rally is organised by the 400,000-member Indian community, the largest in the Gulf state of 2.5 million people. It is "a gesture of thanks for (Sheikh Zayed's) generous efforts towards the well-being of both the nationals and foreigners in UAE ..." a press release said.

Carrying UAE promotional videos and tourist posters, the group of businessmen, bankers and humanitarians will also travel to Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Austria, Germany, France and the United Kingdom.

Mr. Bose said it was decided to run the 35-day rally to the former communist countries to "celebrate" their freedom following the collapse of the Soviet Union and their relative peace.

ADC calls on Arabs to adopt unified stand ahead of next bilaterals

By Caroline Faraj
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The American Arab Anti Discrimination Committee (ADC) Sunday demanded that Arab countries adopt a unified and principled stand under all circumstances and regardless of the existing differences among their regimes, especially before heading for the next round of Arab-Israeli peace negotiations which will open in Washington on Aug. 24.

At a press conference held at the Amman Regency Hotel, ADC Vice President Wafaa Nasser called on all Arabs to undertake a general mobilisation effort to confront the Zionist enemy in the American arena.

"We must invade the American arena with a united Arab force and with one voice if we want to achieve positive results," Mr. Nasser said.

Referring to the work of the ADC in the United States, Mr. Nasser said that the organisation came into being to support the Arab causes and in the past year, launched a campaign against the American administration's plans to grant Israel the loan guarantees it required, noting that the

loans would have their adverse consequences on the Arab-Israeli peace process.

"We cannot imagine a peace treaty with Israel today only to see floods of Jewish immigrants invading the occupied Arab region the next day," added Mr. Nasser.

During the election campaign American leaders are offering more and more aid to Israel at the expense of the legitimate Arab and Palestinian rights, Mr. Nasser said.

Mr. Nasser said ADC does not receive financial assistance from any Arab country although it works to protect the interests of all Arabs. ADC receives donations from individual Arabs and businessmen, he said.

Mr. Nasser said ADC has a working budget estimated at \$2 million, which is being utilised in the American arena and put to good use in 435 constituencies, particularly where the Zionist lobby is most active.

The ADC, he said, is working to help achieve a peaceful settlement to the Palestine problem and not a capitulatory solution because the Arabs are determined to attain just peace.

University of Jordan hosts seminar on water harvesting

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Delegates from Jordan and four other Arab countries gathered at the University of Jordan Sunday for a 12-day training seminar on water harvesting, organised by the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) in cooperation with the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Jordan.

All countries involved in the seminar have semi-dry regions, with vast areas receiving little water and which have great need to collect the surface run-off rain water by creating catchment areas and building earth dams, said Dr. Nasser Abddad, ICARDA regional programme coordinator for West Asia.

Dr. Abddad told the Jordan Times that a variety of techniques can be followed to collect the run-off surface water to help create range land in the areas with low rain fall.

He said that Jordanian, Syrian, Iraqi, Yemeni and Omani at the seminar will discuss different means of harvesting rain water, water economics, rain hydrology, water projects, surface run-off water, leakage, surface storage and design of water harvesting systems and their applications in Jordan.

Agriculture Faculty Dean Walid Abu Gharbieh told the opening session that ICARDA was lending a helping hand to such projects being carried out in Jordan, Syrian, Iraq, Oman and Yemen which have similar terrain.

For its part, the Faculty of Agriculture initiated a water harvesting technique at Muwaqqariq 1986 and the results have been very encouraging. ICARDA representative at the meeting, Dr. Owens, said that the Western Asia region lacks sufficient qualified and trained cadres capable of handling water harvesting techniques. He said it is vital for the semi-arid states to come up with techniques and systems to collect in water of which, he noted, much is currently lost through evaporation.

ICARDA has now embarked on studies of hadia regions in these countries to help them create appropriate systems to collect rain water and to train cadres to deal with water harvesting technology and its applications, noted Dr. Owens.

Established in 1977, ICARDA is governed by an independent board of trustees. Based at Aleppo, Syria, it is one of 13 centres supported by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research which is a consortium of over 40 countries, international and regional organisations and private foundations.

According to ICARDA officials, the centre focuses its research and efforts on areas with a dry summer and were precipitation in winter ranges from 200 to 600mm. The Centre has a world responsibility for the improvement of barley, lentil and bean and a regional responsibility in West Asia and North Africa for the improvement of wheat, chickpea, and pasture and forage crops as well as associated farming systems.

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HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Indonesia, Bongo

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday sent a cable to Indonesian President Suharto to congratulate him in his name and on behalf of the Jordanian people and government on his country's national day. King Hussein wished Mr. Suharto good health and happiness and the Indonesian people further progress and prosperity. "The King sent a similar congratulatory cable to president of the Gabon Omar Bongo, wishing him good health and happiness and the Gabon people further progress and prosperity."

Islamic council praises Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — The Higher Islamic Da'wa Council has lauded His Majesty King Hussein's efforts to support the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina and highlighted Jordan's "generous aid" extended to the Somali people. A cable sent by the council to the King expressed appreciation for His Majesty's efforts and voiced confidence that Jordan would continue its endeavours to stop the massacres committed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Somalia. The cable was signed by council president Jad Al Haq Ali and secretary general Kamel Al Sharif.

Rice shipment arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — The Planning Ministry Sunday said a shipment of Italian rice weighing 4575 tonnes had arrived in Jordan recently. The shipment is part of 18,000 tonnes of Italian rice donated by the Italian government to Jordan to help alleviate the negative effects of the Gulf crisis. The Italian government had earlier agreed to provide some \$23 million in assistance to Jordan, two thirds of which is rice, while the remaining third will be wheat or flour. The remaining quantities of the rice will reach Jordan within the next couple of months. The donation is part of \$55 million that Italy pledged to pay to Jordan in the form of technical and in-kind assistance between 1991 and 1993.

Jordan, Lebanon hold trade talks

AMMAN (Petra) — The Joint Jordanian-Lebanese expert group meetings start here Monday to pursue economic and commercial talks concluded between the two sides late last month. The meetings, aimed at preparing lists of commodities to be exchanged between both countries, will be co-chaired by the Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary General Marwan Awad and the Director General of the Lebanese Ministry of National Economy. During the several-day meetings, the two parties will discuss means of enhancing cooperation in the economic and commercial fields. The expert group meetings come ahead of the meetings of the Joint Jordanian-Lebanese Committee, which will take place later this month.

Arabyat, Sudanese official visit army division

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabiyat and the Speaker of the Sudanese Transitional National Assembly Mohammad Al Amin Khalifeh Sunday visited the 12th Royal Mechanised Division, where they were received by the division's commander, and a number of officers. Commander of one of the division's formations briefed Dr. Arabiyat and his guest on the strategic and geographic importance of the area where the division is stationed and the duties and tasks assigned to it. A number of Arab youth, taking part in the Pan-Arab Youth Camp, held currently at Ajloun, also visited the division and were briefed on its duties and activities.

Trade delegation leaves to China

AMMAN (Petra) — A labour delegation headed by Ahmad Sabaan, public relations secretary at the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions, left for Peking Sunday on a 10-day visit to China. The delegation will hold talks with President of All China Workers Federation and a number of Chinese officials, on bilateral relations in the labour and vocational fields.

RSS studies tar sand and paint for solar collectors

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian government recently granted the Royal Scientific Society (RSS), JD 30,000 to help it carry out two studies.

The first study is related to exploiting tar sand at Wadi Asail in the Karak Governorate. The second aims at developing paints suitable for solar collectors.

RSS Vice President and Director of the Industrial Chemistry Centre Dr. Sa'id Alloush said that the study on the exploitation of tar sand aims at conducting laboratory experiments on representative samples of this material, defining the best method to be

used in extracting oil of it and setting the optimum laboratory conditions for such operation.

According to Dr. Alloush, the study also aims at defining the ratio of oil in these samples and its relation with the method of extraction, the components of impurities and solids suspended in oil, the physical and chemical characteristics of the by-products, in addition to defining the work conditions and conducting laboratory experiments to find out the possibility of benefiting from inorganic by-products in the manufacture of insulation materials.

Work on new Salt road nears completion

SALT (Petra) — Minister of Public Works and Housing Saad Hayel Al Sour said that work on a JD6 million road linking Wadi Shajra with Salt and Al Ardah will be finished on Aug. 20.

During a visit to the project on Sunday, Mr. Sour said the road, which was initially set to be completed on November 15, 1991, will improve the entrance to Salt city, enlarging the main road leading to it.

The new road will be a two-lane 20-metre wide street. The Ministry of Public Works

and Housing has so far this year spent JD2.86 million on agricultural and village roads and on maintenance of main roads in the Balqa region, up by 88 per cent from the amount spent during the same period in 1991, Mr. Sour said.

Mr. Sour said the ministry was striving to carry out all road projects before the end of 1992. The ministry is studying the prospects of announcing a tender for the construction of the Wadi Shajra bridge by the end of 1992, said the minister.

DEF finances 550 projects

AMMAN (Petra) — The development and employment fund (DEF) invested JD 3 million in 550 projects during the first six months of this year, DEF Director General Abdul Ilah Abu Ayyash has said.

The projects are expected to provide 1500 employment opportunities throughout the Kingdom. Dr. Abu Ayyash said the projects include 535 projects for individuals and 15 projects for social work societies.

He pointed out that loans to societies totalled JD 2.7 million. The projects were divided among the agricultural, industrial, handicrafts and service sectors. The agricultural projects,

including bee-keeping and poultry, took the lion's share with a total of 1.4 million, followed by the industrial sector with 47 per cent of the total amount of loans.

Dr. Abu Ayyash said projects, benefiting from the DEF loans, were divided proportionately among the various governorates and regions, with Amman governorate accounting for 40 per cent of the total loans. He added that loans mainly went to unemployed university graduates, holders of community college diplomas, graduates of vocational training centres and holders of the General Secondary Examination certificate.

Arab scientists meet in Amman

AMMAN (J.T.) — About 150 Arab scientists and technologists living and working abroad will gather at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) in Amman Monday for the first congress of Arab Scientists and Technologists abroad, organised by the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST).

The three-day congress, which will hold its sessions at the Jerusalem Hotel, is expected to hear a keynote address by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan before getting down to reviewing working papers dealing with the status of science and technology in the Arab World. They will also

deal with projects, the status of higher education, avenues for transfer of know-how, supercomputers, transportation, nuclear technology application in energy, water and environmental science among others.

Organisers of the congress include Dr. Munir Nayfeh from Illinois University, Dr. Abdullah Toukan from the HCST, Dr. Hani Mulki from the Royal Scientific Society (RSS), Dr. Ibrahim Badran from the Ministry of Industry and Trade in Jordan, Dr. Sahim Sabri from the University of Jordan, Dr. Ali Abdullah from the Arab Atomic Energy Agency.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

Exhibitions

★ Exhibition entitled "Exploring Science" at the British Council.

Lecture

★ A lecture entitled "Excavations at North Shannah Bus Stop" by Dr. Graham Philip of the British Institute for Archaeology and History, at ACOR — 7 p.m.

Poetry Recital

★ Arabic poetry recital by Dr. Izzeddin Munassra at the Scientific and Cultural Centre of Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation — 6 p.m.

Al Fuhels Festival

★ Lecture, in Arabic, on "The Role of the Media in the Democratic Era" by Jordan Television Director General Ibrahim Shalhada and Chief Editor of Al Ahali Newspaper Jamil Al Nisri at Al Fuhels Plaza of Culture — 6 p.m.

★ Arabic poetry recital by Ibrahim Nasrallah, Habib Al Zyoudi, Basel Talloun and Mohammad Al Ameri at the Plaza of Culture — 7 p.m.

★ Performance by Al Taffeh Troupe for folk arts at Al Fuhels main theatre — 9 p.m.

★ Arabic play entitled "Abian New Local and International Order," starring Nabil Sawalha, Hisham Yonis and Nadira Imran, at Al Fuhels main theatre — 10 p.m.

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.
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Justifiable calls

PALESTINIAN calls to postpone the Aug. 24 round of Arab-Israeli talks until the Americans clarify the terms under which U.S. President George Bush has agreed to grant Israel the \$10 billion loan guarantees are indeed understandable if not totally justifiable. As much as the Bush administration seeks a political triumph in the Middle East to advance President Bush's prospects for reelection in November with the help and cooperation of the Arab side, the Arab parties to the peace talks likewise are entitled to a quid pro quo from Washington by insisting that they not be sold short in any deal with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. This is not to suggest that the Palestinians or any other Arab party for that matter have no vested interest in promoting peace with the Israelis through the resolution of the entire Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of international legitimacy. In fact the Arab side has been championing the cause of peace in the region for many years but consistently rebuffed by previous Israeli governments, especially the Likud-led coalition of former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. It must be understood though that the Arab parties can never accept peace at any price. That is why there is every legitimate reason to seek not only clarifications from Washington on the conditions under which the loan guarantees were granted to Israel but also assurances that American money will not be used to expand Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. If for example there is a U.S. endorsement of the Israeli request to link the ending of the Israeli settlement programmes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with the ending of the Arab economic boycott against the Jewish state then the Palestinians and the other Arab countries have every reason to be concerned because the former is illegal per se and the other is common feature of a state of war in which we still live in this part of the world. And if the Israeli pronouncements about halting their colonisation campaign in the occupied territories are nothing but a public relations gimmick, then the Arab side too has a good cause for anxiety and scepticism. Like Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi has affirmed repeatedly in the wake of the announcement that Bush and Rabin had struck a deal on the loan guarantee issue during their summit last week, the Palestinian side would have no qualms about granting the loan guarantees provided the deal was predicated on total, but not selective, freeze of the Israeli housing projects on Arab soil. Both Jordan and Syria are sympathetic with the Palestinian concern and they themselves have demanded clarifications about the terms of the U.S.-Israel deal even though the two countries have thus far refrained from linking their participation in the next round of peace talks to the receipt of U.S. assurances. The fact of the matter remains that the Arab rejection of any distinction between "political" and "security" settlements is proper and correct. What is at stake here is the future of the West Bank and Gaza which will be sealed in Israel's favour if such distinction is not rejected outright, especially if the so-called security fortresses that Israel seeks to maintain will be a permanent feature on Arab lands. It is bad enough that the Arabs are not demanding rolling back the Israeli settlement programme since 1967 in accordance with the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions that term settlements illegal. To make any additional concessions to the Israelis on this issue would therefore make a mockery of the entire peace exercise. With this in mind, the Arabs cannot afford to deliver their cooperation with Washington on a silver platter. They must seek reasonable guarantees that they are not being sold cheap by their American friends to the Israelis.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE CURRENT military exercises in Kuwait and the Gulf waters can only be interpreted as an intentional escalation of tension preparing the atmosphere for yet another aggression on Iraq, said Sawt Al Shaab daily. The paper said that the exercises, coupled with constant American threats against Baghdad and continued propaganda campaigns waged by Israel, Egypt, the U.S. and the Gulf states are tantamount to beating the drums of war on Iraq. It is a mystery why the Arabs should hold on to foreign powers, opening the Arab countries doors for neo-colonialism that can loot Arab wealth and deprive the Arab region of stability and peace, wondered the paper. It said that the lessons learnt from the Gulf war were so painful that one can only think it is almost impossible for the peoples of this region to endure yet another aggression. If the beating of the drums of war continues in the coming days, then the area is bound to witness yet another conflagration that can bring about further sufferings and more destruction to the Arab people, the paper continued. It said that the war on Iraq can not prevent the fire from extending towards the Gulf states and the interests of the western powers which are leading the campaign on Iraq, Jordan, said the paper, has called in the past for ending the crisis by peaceful means and through coordination among Arab regimes and it is again calling for reason and for more efforts to end the new crisis without bloodshed.

A COLUMNIST in Al-Rai daily said that Jordan ought to deal with other Arab countries in the same manner that they deal with the Kingdom and should ban all newspapers and other periodicals from coming into the country. We, in Jordan, are patient people and believe deeply in democracy and free expression, but we can not help seeing Jordanian papers and magazines confiscated or banned from entry into the Gulf states and Egypt while papers from these countries are allowed to enter Jordan, said Tareq Masarweh. The writer said that we are tolerant and democratic and would like to deal with all countries in a friendly manner, but we do not like to be classified as naive or cowards, unable to pay others in kind, said the writer. A Jordanian woman, he said was banned entry into one of the Gulf states simply because she was holding a Jordanian newspaper.

Palestine and America's imperial imperative

By Samih Farsoun

The collapse of the Soviet Union has already had a profound impact on the contemporary world order. In turn, the regional orders are undergoing important restructuring, perhaps no more dramatically than the Middle East. This evolving new Middle East world as never before, reconfirmed American power and influence in the region and energised the Bush administration to restart the peace process anew—a process that stands a chance, for the first time in nearly half a century, to resolve, politically, the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Over the last 20 years, the Middle East has been experiencing an especially rapid rate of integration into the world capitalist markets and has come to play an increasingly important role not only in the domestic economies of Western powers but also in relation to their intensifying rivalry. The Middle East, especially Saudi Arabia, has the largest known reserves of oil, the most important strategic and most traded commodity in the world. Middle East oil-exporting countries collectively, and Saudi Arabia individually, have the capacity to strongly influence oil prices and thus the economic condition of the industrial powers.

As significantly, oil exporting countries, especially of the Arabian Peninsula, have phenomenal petro-dollar surpluses deployed in Western financial markets and have the potential to accumulate more surpluses in the future. In other words, the oil exporting states of the Arabian Peninsula may reemerge by the 21st century as financial powers even more intimately tied to the highly integrated global capital markets. Such potential is important for the competing imperial powers.

The 1980s have brought about significant economic changes. For one thing, the U.S. emerged as the largest debtor nation in the world after having been the largest creditor since World War II. While the implications of this are arguable, the following is quite clear: The U.S. is no longer the overwhelming hegemonic power which can single-handedly structure and set the parameters of the world political and economic order. Thus, the 1980s have given way to a multi-polar economic world.

Control of world oil

For an American advantage over other rivals Middle Eastern oil is crucial. Indeed, one can make a strong argument that central to American global hegemony after World War II, and I believe now, is control of world oil, which ultimately explains the strategic and tactical underpinnings of American policy towards the region: opposition to the Soviet presence, enmity to Arab nationalist regimes and to Palestinian nationalism, the strategic alliance with Israel, early support for political Islam (before 1979), the Gulf war against Iraq, current enmity to militant Islam and the current leadership in and monopolisation of the peace process for solving the Palestine question and the ancillary Arab-Israeli conflict. But it should be clear that the structural conditions for American interest in resolving the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict are secondary to and largely a reflection of its vested interest in the oil industry, the security of dependent oil-exporting states and Israel.

American political and military control of the region is its guarantee to the economic control of the area and its strategic resource:

oil. Hence, in the wake of the cold war it is in the American national interest to control the Middle East and thus imperative to resolve destabilising conflicts such as the Palestine question. It is also in its interest to eliminate anti-American regimes (Saddam, Qaddafi), to blunt militant Islam and to secure peninsular tribal monarchies. This is America's imperial imperative. Thus, whether Mr. Bush or Mr. Clinton wins the American elections, the imperative of a political resolution of the Palestine question will have to be pursued. The issue for Palestinian negotiators, the PLO and the Palestinian people in general is not the American imperative for resolving the Palestine question but rather the conditions—global, regional and domestic—under which the imperative will be pursued and the terms of parameters of the resultant solution.

Since the Gulf crisis, the U.S. has taken the global initiative: Its emergent Western rivals and former enemy (the Soviet Union) were manoeuvred to support it. The Arab states have lost all political and economic leverage against the U.S. (compare the current situation to the 1970s). Indeed, most Arab states are dependent either politically/militarily (eg the oil exporting states) or economically (eg Egypt) on the U.S. As important, the Arab bourgeoisie (new and old) are anxious for peace or political stability in the region and thus welcome the American effort in the peace process. No less dependent on America for solving its own economic, immigrant absorption and political dilemmas (especially the intifada) is Israel. Thus, the U.S., because of its own "national interest" and the international strategic situation, has emerged as the only power broker in the peace process.

The new political environment

But the U.S. is unable to manage this process in a controlled environment. Its government is constrained by international, regional and domestic forces, pressures which condition the character of the peace process and the nature of its outcome. Contrary to Western politicians, the demise of communism and the disintegration of the Soviet Union have not been accompanied by an expansion or growth of capitalism and liberal social-political relations. On the contrary, Western economies are fragile, their unemployment rates relatively high and rising, their inner cities disintegrating, their societies polarising.

Nowhere are the dilemmas of Western capitalism more sharply expressed than in the United States. The long recession and the process of deindustrialisation combined to hurt the well-being of the American middle class, generating widespread frustration and political dissatisfaction not only with the political leadership but also with the political system itself. A new mood hostile to foreign aid and foreign involvement has emerged in association with "solve America's problems first" populism.

It is the changed view of the Palestinian people due to the intifada (and not the politicising of the PLO), Israel's negative image under Likud, its decline as a strategic asset with the end of the cold war, and the difficult economic situation in the U.S. that are behind the denial of Israel's request for a \$10bn loan guarantee by the Bush administration.

The pressure to come to the

Madrid conference, the denial of the loan guarantees and the verbal opposition to Israel's settlements campaign are in indication of the changed political climate in the U.S. in relation to the "special" U.S.-Israel relationship. The challenge of Secretary of States Baker to the pro-Israel lobby in the U.S. in May 1989 that "the idea of greater Israel must be abandoned" and that of President Bush's criticism of that lobby in September 1991 (when he announced his intention to postpone consideration of the loan guarantees) are unprecedented over the last 30 years.

Such a new political environment is bound to have a direct impact on U.S. Middle East policy. However, lest the reader conclude too quickly that the changed situation now favours the Palestinian people, it should be clear that the Bush administration structured the Arab-Israeli negotiations, starting with the Madrid conference to accommodate Israel's position to the disadvantage of the Palestinians. This position, which is well-known to the Palestinians and the Arab World, includes acceptance of no U.N. resolutions except 242 and 338, no U.N. role except observer status, no role for or negotiations with the PLO, no recognition of or negotiation with diaspora Palestinians, no recognition of Palestinian rights to self-determination and no independent Palestinian state. Peace negotiations are to be over an interim agreement on limited autonomy only for Palestinians under occupation.

The conditions—especially of the cold war and of radical Arab nationalism—which created the strong U.S.-Israel strategic alliance have changed. Both have disappeared. And the regional situation which sustained that alliance has also changed. The key developments are the intifada and its potentially destabilising effects on Israel and on the Arab states surrounding historic Palestine, and the rise of political Islam, a movement which adopted the old ideological liberalist platform of Arab nationalism and thus threatens to delegitimise and destabilise the pro-American oil regimes of the Peninsula, Egypt and other Arab states.

Additionally, the U.S. is interested in sustaining, at least regionally, the Gulf war alliance which legitimises and consolidates its influence in the region. These changes have altered both the global and regional balance of power and decreased significantly the role of Israel as a strategic asset. While the Reagan administration embraced Likud's Israel and its goals as part and parcel of its anti-communist crusade and export of counter-revolution (both Israel and Saudi Arabia were strategic assets in this for the U.S.), the Bush administration has distanced itself from hardline colonialist Israel and manoeuvred to put Labour back in power.

It should be clear from the above that the popular Arab view, that the pro-Israel lobby in the U.S. and its allies (the fundamentalist Protestants, including the born-again Christians, the doctrinaire anti-communists and "cold warriors," the neo-conservatives, etc) have not captured or hijacked American Middle East policy. U.S. policy on the Middle East, as on other regions of the world, is determined by the American imperial imperative and is made by the foreign policy establishment based on its conception of America's national

geo-strategic, ideological and economic interests. These have changed in the wake of the cold war, and that is why the Bush administration clashed with a rejectionist Israel. In this clash, the administration easily defeated the vaunted Zionist lobby.

Now the Bush administration has achieved the desired change in the Israeli government. It is also reaching out and rebuilding its support within the organised Jewish community. The U.S.-Israeli alliance will indeed remain in place but will function more on terms defined by the U.S. itself and with somewhat weaker domestic constraints. The continuity of the alliance is based on the extensive and mutually beneficial structure of technological, intelligence, military, industrial and political interests in the region and elsewhere and the support of American Jews, the pro-Israel lobby and its allies.

The differences between the presidential protagonists on Middle East policy will, I believe, be unannounced but not dramatic. Whichever emerges after the November elections will still be subject to Israeli manipulation, especially because of the deep wellspring of pro-Israel sentiment in official and unofficial America. This is especially true now as the albatross of the ugly, intransigent, rejectionist, repressive and human-rights-violating Israel (of Mr. Shamir and Likud) has been replaced by a more cosmetic, cooperative, chaste and forthcoming velvet glove on an iron fist. Israel (of Mr. Rabin and Labour).

The Palestinians' moment of truth

Neither the U.S. nor the Israeli government of Mr. Rabin recognise Palestinian national rights. Resolution of the Palestine question in the form of truncated local autonomy in the occupied territories is now likely to further the renewed U.S.-Israel alliance, especially in the face of Arab acquiescence and/or collaboration. The U.S. will use its Arab leverage to pressure the Palestinians into accepting solutions far short of their aspirations.

Thus the Palestinian delegation should expect massive American, Arab and Israeli (and probably European and Russian) pressure to concede more Palestinian rights at the peace talks in order to bring about a quick solution. A report in the New York Times quotes a senior Bush administration official as saying that the Arabs "have been sitting around for the past year and a half watching the spectacle of the Bush administration fight with Israel. It was a great show, but it is over now and their moment of truth is coming."

However, the imperial American imperative in the changing global situation prescribes a basic policy: Control of the Middle East politically and economically. This can be accomplished only by resolving the most outstanding problems—the Palestine conflict, elimination of the regimes of Iraq and Libya and control of the Islamic political thrust.

Indeed, the U.S. and the new Israeli government now believe that the solution of the Palestine question is not only more urgent but also easier than the other problems as the Palestinians are the weaker party and a solution can be achieved at their expense. Further, they believe that a solution, even an interim one, of the forever squandered historic opportunity to regain a more just political resolution to the Palestine question. The U.S.-Israel

Palestine question may even help defuse militant Islam and delegitimise anti-American Arab nationalist leaders such as Saddam Hussein and Qaddafi. Such a development would help save the legitimacy and security of the oil monarchies.

Falling for this strategy and succumbing to tripartite pressure for a quick but unjust solution may give the Palestinian leadership the illusion of victory. Accepting such a solution may and the Arab states have as much a vested interest in resolving the

Palestine problem as the Palestinian people have as long as the Intifada goes on. Thus the Palestinian leadership in this changed world does have the moral and political leverage to insist on a just solution which recognises Palestinian national rights in full.

Professor Samih Farsoun is chairman of the Department of Sociology at the American University, Washington DC. The article is reprinted from London-based Middle East International.

LETTERS

Food for thought

To the Editor:

Three weeks ago, Professor Hassan Hanafi, the chairman of the Philosophy Department at Cairo University, gave a lecture at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation entitled "Crisis in Arab Culture." His lecture was both stimulating and inspirational, but to an important extent, the bulk of it was a repeat of a paper he presented at the Jordan University in December, 1983.

Nevertheless, Prof. Hanafi made an interesting remark that might benefit the ongoing debate in the Jordan Times between Islamic and Western-minded Arab intellectuals, which started with the publishing of Randa Haidi's article "Ruling and over ruling." (Jordan Times, May, 30, 1992).

At the lecture, in response to a question, Prof. Hanafi said that if hundred Arabs gathered to freely discuss the problems of Arab culture, then probably, five out of the hundred would be Western-minded intellectuals (he labeled them as "the elite") who know what they are talking about, but don't know how to communicate with their intended audience because their ideas are considered alien. And probably, another five would be Muslim fundamentalists, who know how to communicate with most people because Islam has a strong and a wide base, but their views show that they don't know what they are talking about. And the remaining ninety people, whom Prof. Hanafi labeled as the "silent majority," would be waiting to hear something else because they are not convinced by either side.

Although Prof. Hanafi's remark seems to be, on its face value, a fair description of the intellectual scene, the response of his audience at the Shoman Foundation revealed that it could be easily misunderstood. Therefore, to avoid any misunderstanding, I think we should keep in mind the following points:

— Probably, the most important thing that people should remember when they are discussing Islam and politics is the following: They must distinguish between Islam itself and how different political groups interpret and understand Islam. It is important to see that the claim "we believe that all the teachings of Islam are absolutely true" does not entail the claim that "Our actual understanding of the teachings of Islam is also absolutely true."

Any interpretation of Islam is fallible, not absolute, and a product of human thought, and therefore such an interpretation cannot be separated from human needs and interests. Because if this is not the case, how can we explain all the disagreements in the history of Islamic philosophy on topics like free will and predestination, the attributes of Allah, the place of reason in Islam, and especially the intense disagreements on topics concerning Islamic concepts of social and political justice? In other words, whoever believes that there is a unique clear neutral (interest free) interpretation of Islam, should now that such a belief is problematic.

Prof. Hanafi thinks that some (not all) Islamic groups are misguided because they confront modern challenges with a mentality that is rooted in the age of the great Islamic conquests, but in reality, the Islamic World, for the past century, has gone from one defeat to another. Therefore, it seems that there is something wrong in the logic that is guiding these groups. Explicitly, how can the Muslims of today think, act, and talk as if the Islamic world is still victorious?

Of course, the political programmes of these Islamic groups attract many people because they promise to bring back the glorious past of Islam. But, if we look carefully at the political situation in the world, keeping in mind that there are at least three countries that can destroy the whole planet several times over, it is not hard to see that such a promise is empty and romantic. That is why Prof. Hanafi thinks that some Islamic political groups, with all their good intentions, need to seriously reexamine their views.

Although Western-minded Arab intellectuals raise important questions like: "What are the conditions that make Arab government legitimate?" "What are the best ways to balance the autonomy of the Arab individual and the powers of his/her government?" "Is it possible to reconcile the concepts of Islam and the concepts of democracy?" and so on, they fail to speak a language that the ordinary man understands. It is not an exaggeration to say that in most discussions the language these so-called Arab intellectuals use is not Arabic, and if they use Arabic, they use it in a rather obscure way.

As a general rule, it is the duty of the intellectual to clarify difficult questions in a language that everyone can understand. And surely, his function does not include using obscure language that alienates his audience.

One Indian-born-British writer, in one of his novels, where a father talks about his son, said: "If he went abroad to learn contempt for his own kind, then his own kind can feel nothing but scorn for him."

That is why, and it is rather sad, Prof. Hanafi thinks that these Western-minded Arab intellectuals live unnoticed on the margins.

— Many people who hear dissident ideas, like Prof. Hanafi's, for the first time, tend to respond by attacking the moral character of the speaker. For instance, in my few visits to the lectures at the Shoman Foundation, there is always someone who accuses intellectuals of either being paid off by evil politicians, or being indirectly controlled by the CIA and therefore, whatever they say, must be false. If these accusations indicate anything, they indicate the bad methods of reasoning that the accuser is using. Specifically, when one argues in this way, one is committing a logical fallacy, that philosophers call ad hominem, where an opponent of a certain argument verbally abuses the arguer hoping that such a move will undermine the soundness of the argument.

Instead of calling the moral character of intellectuals into question, when a disagreement about the soundness of a certain argument arises, it should be shown that the premises of the argument do not support its conclusion, or that its premises are utterly false. There is no need to verbally (or worst physically) abuse anyone on the grounds that he or she happens, to see the world differently.

I hope that Professor Hanafi's remark, or I should say my understanding of it, will encourage the "silent majority" to think for itself rather than to just passively wait for the outcome of this important debate.

Ayman Yasin,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Environment may tip scales in 1992 U.S. election

By Andrea Shalal-Esa
Reuters

WASHINGTON — The environment is trailing other issues in this year's U.S. presidential election, but it could well tip the scales in a close race.

"Jobs and health care top the list," says Democratic pollster Vic Fingerhut. He says 15 to 20 per cent of Americans view the environment as a priority, and in an election that is a significant number.

Michael Deland, head of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, sees ecology as a key issue, with its importance growing if the economy picks up as expected. "Clearly, a large percentage of Americans are concerned about the environment," he said, noting that some 70 per cent of U.S. citizens claimed to be environmentally conscious.

How that concern will translate into votes is unclear, but both ecology and business groups say the choice between Democrat Bill Clinton and President George

Bush won't be easy.

They say Mr. Clinton has a poor track record as governor of Arkansas but has made environmental protection a priority by naming as his running mate Tennessee Senator Al Gore, who wrote a best-selling book on the environment this year.

Mr. Bush, who has billed himself "the environmental president" and who pushed major Clean Air Act revisions through Congress in 1990, is now campaigning against imposing tougher rules at the cost of jobs. Republicans will focus on Mr. Clinton's failure to clean up Arkansas, while attacking Mr. Gore for his "radical views."

Democrats are attacking Vice President Dan Quayle's efforts to promote big business interests by watering down tough regulations. "The choice is pretty clear," says Christopher Flavin, a senior researcher at the respected World Watch Institute. "Bush started out with a mixed track record, but a lot went downhill during his administration."

Mr. Bush says the Clean Air

Act is proof of his commitment to lower pollution emissions, but Mr. Quayle's "council on competitiveness" has repeatedly acted to diffuse new environmental regulations.

Even Republican pollsters say the environment could be a sensitive issue for Mr. Bush, not least because of negative publicity at the United Nations earth summit in Brazil in June.

Mr. Bush raised the ire of other world leaders in Rio de Janeiro by initially refusing to sign an accord setting targets for lower carbon dioxide emissions, claiming it would jeopardise thousands of U.S. jobs. He also rejected a global treaty on biodiversity.

"I just don't think we can go to extremes in the name of the environment, whether it's to deny hunting or fishing... or to shut down businesses," he told hunters in Utah last month.

Mr. Deland said the White House would highlight Mr. Bush's "solid environmental record" and focus on Mr. Clinton, whose state ranked 50th on the Institute for Southern Studies'

green index.

Mr. Clinton angered environmentalists by inviting pro-business leaders to Arkansas' pollution board and backing plans for a toxic waste incinerator. But many changed their views after he supported complete environmental reform in 1991.

Mr. Flavin at Worldwatch said he doubted environmental voters would buy Bush's line and former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, defeated by Mr. Bush in 1988, said Mr. Bush was misreading the electorate.

"This country cares a lot about the environment," Mr. Dukakis said in an interview. "If Bush and Quayle think they can pull off this jobs versus environment thing, they're all wet. The two go hand in hand."

Mr. Dukakis cited his own experience in 1988 and urged Mr. Clinton to brace for attacks on his environmental record in Arkansas.

Mr. Bush scored one of his biggest campaign coups in 1988 by filming pollution in Boston Harbour.

Sharif Zeid outlines reform action

(Continued from page 1)

tical decisions into actions for overhauling public administration. The government, he added, has taken steps to achieve this goal and has worked out a detailed programme which government departments have been asked to adopt.

Government departments have already taken steps towards the implementation of these plans, especially in matters related to simplification of routine work like those being taken at the Passports Department, the Post and Communications Ministry, the Water and Irrigation Ministry etc., he said. The Customs Department, Sharif Zeid said, will soon declare a number of procedures to facilitate its work and reduce the volume of routine work.

All these steps from the initial sound and safe stages towards modernizing public administration in Jordan, he said.

With regard to special recommendations related to ministries and government departments the prime minister said he would pursue them personally to ensure that disciplinary and administrative measures are taken to set matters right.

The prime minister voiced the government's appreciation of the Audit Bureau's efforts and promised full government support for the bureau.

The prime minister, however, said that the Audit Bureau had been in the practice of conducting investigations and announcing financial violations by various departments but in its reports the

bureau was not specific, "something which does not help the process of pinpointing the imbalances and the shortcomings." The bureau is empowered by Article 119 of the Constitution to control state revenues and expenditures and is required to submit a general report giving particulars and details about the violations and present them to Parliament. The Constitution, he said, empowers the bureau also to submit recommendations about the violations and means of dealing with them especially in matters concerning public funds.

He said the bureau had been satisfied all along by merely submitting reports about violations without giving a chance for both sides of the equation to present their views. Therefore, he said, the whole matter requires legal study designed to help make the bureau's annual document serve as a reference for all and each side should receive fair treatment.

He said public administration officials represent an elite of citizens who are honest and loyal to their country. These officials were tested and proved capable of dealing with such important and serious developments like the consequences of the Gulf war on Jordan and they formed the same public administration which helped Jordan contain the monetary crisis and maintain security and stability, opening the way for economic development, he said.

One should be fair to more than 100,000 civil servants, teachers etc. and differentiate between them and a few employees who had committed excesses and violations, he said.

Amman hopes for new Israeli logic

(Continued from page 1)

Washington had reneged on promises that it would seek a total freeze in settlement activity before agreeing to grant the loan guarantees.

The Rabin government has ordered a halt to construction on "political settlements" while "security settlements" would continue to be built. In addition, work on up to 11,000 housing units in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip will continue.

Dr. Majali said Sunday that he was not aware of any plans for a meeting of the Arab negotiators on the issue prior to the next round of talks. Informed sources said the Palestinians had suggested such a meeting but no final shape had been given to the proposal by Sunday evening.

Palestinian delegates were expected in Amman Monday for discussions with their Jordanian counterparts and the sources said some of the negotiators would travel to Tunis for consultations with the PLO leadership.

Meanwhile, the position of the Damascus-backed Democratic Front for the Liberation (DFLP) led by Nayef Hawatmeh is expected to be clarified at a news conference to be held in Amman today by Mr. Hawatmeh.

A DFLP statement issued in Damascus on Sunday called on the PLO and the Arab states to totally stay away from the next round of peace talks with Israel in protest against the American loan guarantees.

DFLP insiders have said that the group was not opposed to the peace talks but was seeking to make a point by delaying the next round of talks. The delay could also help pursue the goal of widening Palestinian representation in

the negotiating team by including delegates from the diaspora, according to the sources.

Sunday's DFLP statement said: "It is vital that the Palestinian and Arab delegations boycott the next round of the bilateral talks in Washington as a reaction to the U.S. loan guarantees to Israel, which continues building settlements in the occupied territories."

Mr. Hawatmeh, in comments to the Jordan Times last week, voiced the same approach and said he rejected Mr. Rabin's proposal for elections for a "self-administrative council" instead of a legislative council sought by the Palestinians to take charge of the affairs of the occupied territories.

However, he said, before the talks move into discussions on the elections Israel should announce a total halt to settlements, the U.S. should ensure that the loan guarantees do not free Israel's own funds to be spent on settlements, the Palestinian representation should be widened to include diaspora delegates and Israel should undertake to respect the human rights of the Palestinian people.

U.S. plans 'confrontation'

(Continued from page 1)

last month when Iraq refused to allow a U.N. inspection team access to its Ministry of Agriculture.

A senior Pentagon official, who spoke only on condition of anonymity, told the AP that Western officials in recent days have discussed "what the coalition might do if Iraq denied access to another site," he added, "You can't rule anything out."

The head of a U.N. arms team in Iraq said Sunday that inspections would resume on Monday. He refused to comment on the reports that the inspectors would provoke a confrontation with Iraq on Monday morning.

"Tomorrow (Monday) will be an inspection day," team leader Nikita Smidovich told reporters outside his Baghdad hotel after lengthy talks with Iraqi officials.

Asked to comment on the New York Times report, he said any comment should come from the U.N. special commission on Iraq.

Mr. Smidovich, a Russian, had five hours of closed-door talks with Iraqi officials and security men and described the talks as "a natural outcome of our previous discussions."

Asked if they discussed whether the U.N. team could enter government buildings, which Iraq was declared off limits to the arms inspectors, Mr. Smidovich said: "I will not disclose the operational details of my discussion."

Iraqi Information Minister Hamed Youssef Hummadi said Iraq would fight to the last if it was attacked.

But he told the German weekly Der Spiegel in an interview the United States was too cowardly

to engage in a land battle.

Mr. Hummadi did not exclude the possibility of another Iraqi attack on Kuwait, saying Baghdad's claim to the emirate had a historical base.

The interview was released on Sunday, ahead of publication on Monday.

Asked if Baghdad was preparing for another military conflict, Mr. Hummadi replied: "If we are attacked, then we will fight to the last man without regard for the consequences."

Mr. Hummadi said that with cruise missiles the United States was more than a match for Iraq.

"But they would not stand a land battle against us," he said. "America is far too cowardly to tangle with the Iraqi army."

He said Iraq would maintain its claim on Kuwait. Asked if this meant using force, he replied: "That is a question which depends on possibilities on offer. Everything is imaginable."

If the United States is planning military action against Iraq, it could be related as much to Baghdad's treatment of Iraqi Shiites in the south of the country as to efforts to dismantle weapons of mass destruction, diplomats said.

A Security Council meeting last Tuesday, called at the request of the Western powers, appeared intended to lay the ground for future action in support of Shiite dissidents besieged in the southern marshes near Iraq's border with Kuwait.

The council first heard a statement by a U.N. human rights commission investigator, former Netherlands Foreign Minister Max van der Stoep, who issued a report last month accusing Iraq of brutal and indiscriminate air and artillery attacks against the southern region.

Progress made on draft law on press

(Continued from page 1)

The Law Committee's rapporteur, Mohammad Abu Faris, countered that the government could use an article like this "to indict journalists." But Minister of Trade and Industry Abdullah Ensour said that the article was not intended to protect governments or persecute journalists.

"It is for protecting the individual," he said.

Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ayef Btoush also defended the government's version. He contended that only the court can decide if a journalist was or was not violating the law.

"The law does not give a minister the right to prosecute, rather the authority lies with the prosecutor general," Mr. Btoush said. He added that all similar laws in Arab and advanced countries included such a clause.

stipulated that periodicals should depend in their finance on "legitimate, limited and declared sources, and should not accept financial support or receive any directives from any foreign state."

Another article requires publishers to submit their annual budget to the director of Press and Publications Department at the Ministry of Information, showing all details of financing.

The last article, passed before the session was adjourned until today, forbids journalists to work for any foreign establishment except as specified by regulations to be set in accordance to the law.

Last Wednesday, the House passed a controversial article which requires that a journalist's source of information, particularly when the information is connected with state security, be revealed before court.

The next article to be passed

Jordan reserves decision

(Continued from page 1)

agreement addressing all issues related to peace and stability in the region."

As the delegates discussed what Jordan hopes to achieve in the next phase of the peace talks, fears that Israel may fall short of meeting Arab expectations remained very much in the background.

One of the overriding concerns in the Jordanian approach to the talks, according to senior government officials, is that the recent American agreement to grant \$10 billion in loan guarantees to Israel could be detrimental to making positive progress.

U.S. President George Bush held back approval for the loan guarantees during the reign of the Likud government, insisting on a freeze in Israel's settlement construction in the occupied territories in return. The president shifted his stand and gave the green signal after the Labour-led government of Mr. Rabin came to power in July and adopted a series of measures curtailing — but not totally freezing — settlement building. The agreement was announced during a Bush-Rabin summit last week.

"We still do not know the details of the (U.S.-Israeli) agreement," said Dr. Tarawneh. "The government, I believe, is still awaiting details."

According to a senior official, if the loan guarantees are issued without a total freeze in Israeli

settlement activities in the occupied territories in return, this could complicate the peace process.

"The fear is that with the loan guarantees in their pocket, the Israelis might not be as forthcoming as we hoped with the election (in June) of Rabin," said the official, who preferred anonymity.

"If the loan guarantees are not coupled with a total suspension of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, it will appear that the Israelis have been rewarded just for electing Mr. Rabin, with the Palestinians and other Arabs getting nothing reciprocatory in terms of peace prospects," said the official.

"This will have a negative impact on the peace process."

Defector says Algeria no longer backs Saharan state

RABAT (R) — Algeria, which has backed Polisario guerrillas in Western Sahara since 1976, no longer supports an independent state in the former Spanish colony, according to a senior Polisario defector.

Ibrahim Hakim, foreign minister of the self-styled Saharan Arab Democratic Republic for 10 years, and its ambassador in Algiers until Tuesday when he defected to Morocco, said:

"The Algerian authorities declared about two months ago it was not in their interest to see a state created in the Sahara and such a state was inconceivable."

Polisario has been fighting since 1976 for an independent state in the desert territory, most

of which is controlled by Morocco.

Mr. Hakim's remarks, reported on Sunday by the Moroccan news agency MAP, were made at a rally on Saturday.

He quoted Major-General Khalid Nezzar, Algerian defence minister, as saying, "You should stop dreaming about a state in the Sahara because the establishment of such a state is not in Algeria's interest and is against its wishes."

Mr. Hakim said he had decided to defect to Morocco because "the vast majority of the Saharans in the Lahmada camps (in the Tindouf area of south-western Algeria) see their future within the framework of a united and unified Morocco."

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81 Business Management with option in Finance	14 Air Conditioning & Refrigeration	10 Private Security Officer	09 Legal Secretary
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Somalia

(Continued from page 1)

got a situation where the entire population is armed," one said.

Experts who have just finished a nine-day sweep through Somalia were rushing to write up recommendations on how to carry out a massive U.N. relief effort.

The United States plans to base its relief operation in the Arid, remote northeastern Kenyan town of Wajir, where there is an airstrip capable of handling large cargo planes.

Food will arrive at Mombasa, be ferried to Wajir by air and be flown into towns in Somalia's interior aboard C-130 Hercules cargo planes, he said.

The first flight into Somalia is expected Aug. 24.

In addition to sending emergency relief food, the United States has contracted a U.S. firm based in Houston, Texas, called Intersect to run a commercial operation in Somalia selling food at low cost to Somali traders in an effort to flood the market with food, the official said.

There has been little available in Somalia's markets since four months of vicious fighting erupted in the capital, Mogadishu, in November, closing the ports and halting imports.

Aid experts have said that once food is readily available on the market, the economy will revive, prices will fall, tensions will ease and the random fighting, looting and banditry that is hobbling relief efforts and killing people will lessen.

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Foreign Exchange Market Summary (August 10-August 14, 1992)

AMMAN — Another pro-dollar intervention by central banks limited the U.S. dollar's decline last week. Trading thus remained within a narrow range, helped by a generally show summer market. The dollar ended the week hardly changed against European currencies, but was 1.2 per cent lower against the yen.

The dollar slipped in subdued trading Monday, while many traders remained sidelined after the Fed's intervention at the end of the previous week. Market participants were expecting a follow-through intervention by the Fed (Federal Reserve).

A group of central banks intervenes, however, Tuesday lifting the dollar from a low of 1.4625 marks and pushing it to what proved to be its highest closing rates of the week. The dollar ended at 1.4670 marks, 127.95 yen and 1.9275 dollar to the pound sterling.

The consensus was that the intervention was merely an attempt by the Fed to improve confidence in the dollar ahead of the U.S. Treasury's refunding. This was further confirmed when a Bundesbank official was quoted as saying that the German central bank only intervened on request from the Fed.

Hence, the general market attitude towards the dollar remained unchanged, i.e. pessimistic, although traders averted taking up new positions as they watched for a possible further intervention.

But as no such intervention materialised by Thursday, a bout of dollar selling pushed the U.S. currency below the 1.46 mark support. The dollar ended at its lowest closing levels of the week against European currencies at 1.4553 marks, 1.9344 dollars to the pound.

The U.S. unit rebounded against the European currencies Friday, recovering most of the previous day's losses. Observers said that the dollar was mainly boosted by a new perception among market participants that the risk of a Lombard interest rate hike in Germany in the medium term was lessened. This was based on news that German wholesale prices dropped by 1.3 per cent in July, and that producer prices had dropped in the same month to an annualized 1.1 per cent from 2 per cent in June. This received further credibility when the Bundesbank's deputy president was quoted as saying that the bank was not interested in a lower dollar and would not be reviewing interest rate levels before two months.

The yen on the other hand posted significant gains against the mark and the dollar as Japanese investing institutions were transferring parts of their foreign assets to Tokyo ahead of end-of-September interim corporate book closing.

New York Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

Currency	7/8/92 Close	14/8/92 Close	Percent Change
Sterling Pound*	1.9295	1.9215	-0.41%
Deutsche Mark	1.4668	1.4645	-0.16%
Swiss Franc	1.5148	1.5210	+0.53%
French Franc	4.9585	4.9675	-0.18%
Japanese Yen	127.50	125.97	+1.20%

USD Per STG

Euro-Currency Interest Rates*

Currency	7/8/92 1-Month (%)	14/8/92 1-Month (%)	1-Month (%)	1-Month (%)
U.S. Dollar	3.25	3.62	3.25	3.56
Sterling Pound	10.00	10.31	9.87	10.12
Deutsche Mark	9.62	9.62	9.75	9.68
Swiss Franc	8.83	8.25	8.06	8.25
French Franc	9.93	10.25	10.06	10.31
Japanese Yen	4.06	3.75	4.06	3.50

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding 1 U.S. dollar, 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	.669	.671
Sterling Pound	1.2836	1.2900
Deutsche Mark	0.4562	0.4585
Swiss Franc	0.5063	0.5088
French Franc	0.1345	0.1352
Japanese Yen*	0.5306	0.5333
Dutch Guilder	0.4047	0.4067
Swedish Krona	0.1254	0.1260
Italian Lira*	0.0600	.0603
Belgian Franc	.02213	.02224

Per 100

Ramos promises economic revitalisation

MANILA (R) — Philippine President Fidel Ramos has vowed to implement an energy plan to eliminate severe power outages in the country and defend a controversial debt restructuring accord signed with international creditors.

The government will concentrate on improving the country's infrastructure to lure badly-needed foreign investment, President Ramos said in an address before a joint session of congress in Manila.

He also pledged to remove restrictions that have stifled trade in the Philippines, liberalise the foreign exchange market, adopt a more realistic exchange rate and raise new taxes to fund infrastructure projects.

"These measures will in time move the economy back to growth," President Ramos declared.

"But let me tell you now that we cannot make do with our present revenue base. Development has a price that must be paid," he said, emphasising the need for fresh taxes.

"A new department of energy is still imperative to make sure our experience of long brownouts (power cuts) during the past several months is never repeated and our long-term energy needs are met," he added.

Millions of dollars in production capacity were lost when a prolonged drought dried up reservoirs powering hydroelectric dams and when breakdowns in ageing power plants led to severe outages in the Philippines.

President Ramos praised a \$4.8 billion debt rescheduling agreement that was signed in London last month despite appeals by some members of congress that the government submit the deal to the lawmakers for approval.

Taiwan's foreign exchange reserves rise to \$86.6b

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan's foreign currency reserves, the largest in the world, surged to a record high of \$86.6 billion at the end of June, the central bank said at the weekend.

The reserves rose from their previous record of \$84.6 billion in May and \$72.2 billion in June 1991, the bank said in a statement Saturday.

It attributed the rise mainly to recent appreciation of the mark and yen against the U.S. dollar, which inflates the value of the reserves when expressed in U.S. dollars.

The reserves were also boosted by increased interest income after the bank shifted some of the funds into new investment vehicles to maximise its return, it said.

Taiwan holds about 55 per cent of the reserves in the form of securities issued by foreign governments and institutions, and the rest as bank deposits. It was the biggest Asian buyer of U.S. government securities in the first quarter of 1992.

About a third are held in the United States, a third in Europe and the rest in Japan and other countries. Between 55 and 60 per cent are denominated in U.S. dollars, central bank governor Samuel Shieh said in a recent interview.

In recent months, the central bank has begun to use the reserves more actively. In February the bank said it would allocate \$10 billion to finance overseas investment by local firms and major domestic development projects.

The reserves have drawn fire from the United States, which runs a trade deficit with Taiwan. Washington said in May their huge size indicated Taiwan was manipulating its currency to gain a trade advantage, a charge which Taipei denied.

In addition to the currency reserves, the central bank holds 13.5 million ounces of gold worth over \$4.5 billion.

Meanwhile, Taiwan's savings rate, though still one of the highest in the world, is expected to

Million British households suffer 'negative equity'

LONDON (R) — Up to one million British homes may be worth less than the value of the mortgage the owners took out to buy them, the Bank of England said in a report Monday.

The problem, known as "negative equity," has been widely blamed for keeping the residential property market in the doldrums and harming consumer confidence and the economy.

The bank's report, released ahead of its quarterly economic bulletin, suggested that, by the second quarter of 1992, 876,000 households suffered negative equity. Rising mortgage arrears lift the figure to one million.

The figures mean one in 10 British homeowners now have mortgage loans are higher than the value of their house. The bank's estimates of households suffering negative equity are lower than the 1.5 million figure suggested in a recent report by merchant bank Morgan Grenfell.

Negative equity has become a major problem because residential house prices have fallen sharply after booming in the late 1980s. The fragile market has been hit further by a wave of home repossessions as borrowers default on loans.

In the three most severely affected regions — southeast England, Greater London and East Anglia, northeast of the capital — the bank estimates that around two-thirds of all first-time buyers who have entered the market since 1988 are now likely to have some negative equity.

It estimates that the total amount of negative equity is around £3.6 billion (\$6.9 billion) for first-time buyers and £2.3 billion (\$4.4 billion) for former owner-occupiers — a total of around £6 billion (\$11.5 billion), or £6,000 (\$11,500), per affected household.

"The national value estimate may, however, be conservative because it assumes a uniform fall in house prices in each region," the bank said.

Ukraine, Kazakhstan back rouble

MOSCOW (R) — The battered rouble was given a vote of confidence this weekend, as Ukraine's top banker said he favoured using the currency and the president of Kazakhstan pledged full support for the rouble zone.

"The rouble should be above national interest and not simply a Russian banknote," Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev told Commonwealth Television Saturday.

"I am going to propose moves to revitalise the rouble. If other (countries) do not agree to that we will do it jointly with Russia," he pointed out.

But Azerbaijan inched away

from the rouble zone and introduced a new parallel currency, the manat, which will be used initially for about 20 per cent of wages and salaries.

One manat is worth 10 roubles, ITAR-TASS news agency said.

The rouble is not freely convertible on world markets, although it is currently trading at around 160 roubles per dollar on Moscow's small-scale currency exchange.

It is still used in most of the former Soviet Union, although the Baltic state of Estonia abandoned the rouble and introduced the kroon in June.

Other republics have brought in parallel currencies like the manat, but these are still linked to the rouble and can be swapped for roubles, not for convertible currencies.

Ukraine has been at the forefront of the countries racing to dump the rouble. Russia's big Slav neighbour introduced a reusable coupon earlier this year, promising to replace the rouble with a new hryvnia currency later.

But the chairman of Ukraine's central bank Saturday urged the government to postpone plans to dump the rouble.

"The situation with the coupon has taken on the characteristics of a national tragedy," he told a news conference.

"The first way to strengthen the coupon is to restrict money supply and credits, but the government continues to print more money and introduced ever more

costly programmes. The second way to is to arrange another temporary marriage with the rouble. Yes, we must temporarily back down," he stressed.

The brightly coloured coupon was originally used parallel to the rouble and the two currencies traded roughly at par.

But it has since effectively replaced the former Soviet currency and one coupon has fallen to about 1.5 roubles on the Kiev black market.

Western bankers and economists have urged the countries of the former Soviet Union to maintain a single currency zone to avoid a complete collapse in trade between countries integrated through seven decades of communist central planning.

Commonwealth Television quoted Kazakh bankers as saying that 85 per cent of this year's fall in production throughout the former superpower was due to a breakdown in economic ties between the newly independent states.

Industrial production has been falling throughout the former Soviet Union as countries adjust to soaring prices for raw materials and tumbling demand for shoddily produced goods.

In the war-torn Transcaucasian state of Georgia, output fell 50 per cent in the first half of the year.

Russian industrial production fell 13 per cent in the period and Ukrainian production was down 10.7 per cent in the first seven months.

China gives new autonomy to state enterprises

PEKING (R) — China has issued a new law aimed at pushing loss-making state businesses to take responsibility for their performance and gear production to the marketplace, the official News China News Agency has said.

Diplomats said the new law was in keeping with the current economic reform drive led by veteran leader Deng Xiaoping — a pragmatic, often dramatic rethinking of the economy which adopts Western-style market theories.

The law gave state enterprises free rein to engage in foreign trade, the agency said. Up to now the government has stipulated which enterprises can conduct overseas trade in an effort to maintain control over hard currency reserves.

Under the new law, "Chinese enterprises will enjoy full operational autonomy in 14 areas, including imports and exports, investments, labour, employment, pricing, marketing and the right to reject any apportionment of manpower, funds and materials," the agency said.

It described the law as "a major even in the industrial reform effort, and in economic restructuring as a whole."

Managers would be responsible for the efficiency of their enterprises, the agency said.

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Georgian factions disengage but ceasefire remains shaky

SUKHUMI, Georgia (R) — Georgian and Abkhazian leaders pulled out their rival forces from the centre of battle-scarred Sukhumi Sunday but sporadic gunfire rang out despite a ceasefire accord.

Fighters from both sides disengaged in an attempt to end three days of fighting which has killed more than 20 people.

Abkhazian Interior Minister Alexander Ankvab described Saturday's truce as a first step towards ending the conflict.

"We have decided to separate the rival forces immediately. This decision will give us the chance to go on with further talks," he told Reuters.

The crisis in Abkhazia, a breakaway region of western Georgia, is the worst to confront former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze since he took over the Georgian leadership in March.

Russia said Saturday it was sending paratroops to Abkhazia to protect military facilities and evacuate Russians.

The leader of the breakaway Chechen Republic in southern Russia condemned Georgian "aggression" in Abkhazia and

placed his own forces on full alert, ITAR-TASS News Agency reported.

Top Georgian and Abkhazian officials renewed talks in a house in the south of Sukhumi, the Abkhazian capital, as their forces withdrew from the centre in opposite directions to create a buffer zone of some four kilometres.

But isolated bursts of machine-gun fire echoed across the city, where Georgian patrols were stopping local cars in an apparent search for arms.

In one incident, I witnessed a patrol pursue a white Volga, shoot out its tyres with Kalashnikov rifles and kill the driver with a shot from 20 metres.

At a Sukhumi sanatorium for vacationing Commonwealth soldiers, located near the scene of the fiercest fighting in past days, there were puddles of blood, smashed windows, traces of mortar bombs and the corpses of two elderly men.

"It was really terrible. We were hiding for more than two days with Abkhazians and Georgians fighting over us," said Tatyana Vasilyeva, the wife of a colonel from the Russian city of Rostov-

On-Don.

An army captain, Vasily, said: "I have been to Afghanistan, but this is much more terrible. I am with my family here."

Officials at the sanatorium said an 18-year-old girl had died in hospital after being shot at the same time as the two men. They were not sure who had fired on them.

Some 600 holidaymakers at the sanatorium were waiting to be evacuated by sea to the nearby Black Sea resort of Sochi in southern Russia. Officials said children would go first.

While Abkhazia's leadership pushed for a compromise with Georgia, nationalists appeared bent on further defiance.

"We must play for time, and wait until support comes from north Caucasian forces and Russian Cossacks," said Alexander Akhba, an ethnic Abkhazian and member of the local parliament.

He appeared to be referring to the Caucasian forces of Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, a supporter of ousted Georgian President and sworn Shevardnadze foe Zviad Gamsakhurdia.

Abkhazia effectively declared independence last month with a parliamentary vote restoring a 1925 constitution. But Georgia declared the decision illegal.

In the Georgian capital Tbilisi, Mr. Shevardnadze rejected accusations that his forces had "invaded" Abkhazia, where ethnic Abkhazians make up only about a quarter of the population and are outnumbered by Georgians.

Georgian television quoted him as saying the troops were protecting the region from "banditry" and were on their own territory. "Sukhumi has to understand that," he said.

Georgia's ruling State Council has accused supporters of Mr. Gamsakhurdia, who is now in exile in the Chechen Republic, of waging guerrilla warfare in the region, blowing up roads and bridges and robbing trains.

Tension boiled over into violence last week when several Georgian officials were kidnapped, arousing Mr. Shevardnadze's wrath and triggering the deployment of Georgian forces.

The kidnapped were released Friday.

Philippine police chief quits, Ramos dismisses cabinet rift

MANILA (R) — Philippine police chief Cesar Nazareno quit Sunday in a widening scandal over the alleged involvement of senior officers in illegal gambling, kidnapping and other crimes.

President Fidel Ramos meanwhile shrugged off reports of bitter infighting in his cabinet.

He took his ministers on a cruise around Manila Bay in an apparent bid to quash reports of schisms between power blocs in his seven-week-old government.

"We laughed at off and poked fun at it," presidential spokeswoman Annabelle Abaya told reporters when asked if the president had patched up differences between his ministers.

Mr. Abaya said before Gen. Ramos and his ministers sailed around the bay the "clarify some coordination tasks in further smoothen the flow of work."

Police Director-General Cesar Nazareno, head of the country's 100,000-strong police force, resigned Sunday, becoming the second high official in a week to leave government.

Peter Garrucho, Gen. Ramos' powerful executive secretary, quit last Monday after Gen. Ramos reversed his order granting tax exemptions to mining companies.

"It's not a big happy family,"

Mr. Garrucho said after his resignation.

Deputy Police Director-General Raul Imperial said Gen. Nazareno quit because "he felt it was time to step down." Gen. Imperial is to take command temporarily.

Gen. Ramos denied he "sacked Nazareno," according to Mr. Abaya.

Manila newspapers, quoting presidential palace sources, said Sunday that Gen. Ramos had fired Gen. Nazareno but the police chief had asked to be allowed a few days to make "a graceful exit."

At least six police officers have been fired for involvement in kidnap-for-ransom gangs since Gen. Ramos took office on June 30 vowing to reform government and restore investor confidence in the troubled South East Asian nation.

Six others officers are under investigation. The kidnappings of rich Chinese-Filipino businessmen and their families triggered a scandal after senior police officers accused each other of protecting kidnappers in Manila.

A police major was dismissed after he was found guilty of accepting a 300,000 peso (\$12,000) bribe from a kidnapper suspect while the Manila police chief was reprimanded for failing to discipline his men.

The cabinet's day-long cruise followed newspaper reports that intrigues in the presidential palace might also force Justice Secretary Franklin Drilon and Public Works Secretary Jose De Jesus out of their jobs.

"We agreed that the so-called power blocs are just creations of the media and... the leader of the single bloc is the president," Mr. Abaya said.

Mr. Abaya said cabinet members, who brought along their wives, danced on board the presidential yacht called The President after discussing steps to ensure a smooth flow of work. The affair was closed to reporters.

Gen. Ramos has admitted scolding some ministers but downplayed reports of serious rifts in the cabinet.

"I try to persuade, you know, the carrot and stick. So far, I haven't spanked anybody yet but I have pinched some," Gen. Ramos told reporters last week.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer newspaper has said there are at least six cliques "driven by loyalty to President Ramos, personal ambition and greed for power" involved in power politics in the presidential palace.

CIA chief: North poisoned by Soviet nuclear legacy

FAIRBANKS, Alaska (R) — Four decades of cold war and a ruthless pursuit of nuclear superiority threaten to turn the Arctic into a sewer for poisonous wastes, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director Robert Gates said.

At a special field hearing of the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee, Mr. Gates outlined reports of contamination from the former Soviet Union's nuclear weapons-making and testing programmes, nuclear power plants and 130 "peaceful" nuclear blasting used for mines and other

industrial sites.

"The former Soviet Union's attitude towards safety and handling of radioactive materials was, to say the least, lackadaisical from the very beginning of its nuclear programme," he said.

The worst practices, he said, were probably at Chelyabinsk, a plutonium production site in south central Russia where waste was dumped directly into the Tcha River until 1951 and into Lake Karachay into the 1960s.

Although far from the Arctic, Chelyabinsk and other sites have contaminated the north, he said.

Mr. Gates said he has ordered the CIA to assemble a team of scientists with security clearance to release intelligence information deemed for environmental cleanups. They plan to use enhanced satellite imagery to track Arctic pollution.

Assistant Secretary of State Curtis Bohlen said U.S. and Alaska state researchers plan to start cooperative research programmes with Russian scientists next year.

Joint Russian-Norwegian teams are already working to sample water in the Barents and

Kara Seas, said Bohlen, who is in charge of the department's Oceans, International Environmental and Scientific Affairs.

Those Arctic waters off western Russia were the graveyards for nuclear-powered Soviet ships and the dumping grounds of more than 10,000 containers of nuclear wastes, he said.

To environmentalists, the attention comes too late and too slowly. Mr. Gates' information confirmed Greenpeace reports, many of them released years ago, said John Handler, research coordinator for the organisation's nuclear free seas campaign.

Armenian protesters call on president to resign

MOSCOW (R) — Thousands of people marched through the Armenian capital Yerevan Saturday to demand the resignation of President Levon Ter-Petrosyan.

News agencies and radio reports said the demonstrators, accusing the president of failing to resolve the conflict over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, rallied in the city's Liberty Square.

They threatened to stage a sit-down protest there if their demands were ignored. "Several thousand people attended the rally and police sealed off President Ter-Petrosyan's residence," the Russian Information Agency (RIA) said, quoting Armenia's Snark Agency.

A presidential spokesman told Snark that Mr. Ter-Petrosyan did not intend to resign. "The speakers sharply criticised the president for his failure to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh problem and to protect the borders of Armenia itself," Moscow Radio said.

At least 2,000 people have been killed in four years of fighting between Armenian and Azeri forces over Nagorno-Karabakh, a disputed territory populated by Armenians but administered by Azerbaijan.

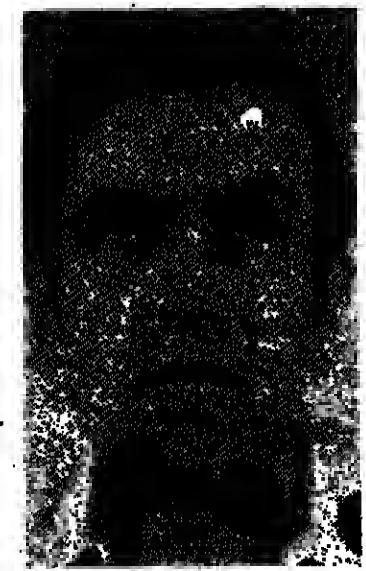
Armenians living in Nagorno-Karabakh say they have been pounded by Azeri forces in a series of offensives in recent months. Armenian losses have fuelled political discontent in Yerevan. Critics of the president, a former dissident, have become increasingly vocal. An umbrella group of seven opposition parties organised Saturday's protest.

ITAR-TASS News Agency said Mr. Ter-Petrosyan, elected by a landslide last October, rejected their demands and called for an extraordinary session of the Transcaucasian country's parliament Monday.

The agenda will include only one item — the holding of a referendum on confidence or no-confidence in the Armenian president, it said.

Opposition leaders have said they could ask parliament to abolish the post of president. A two-thirds majority would be needed to achieve this. The protests in Yerevan coincided with fresh fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh. But there were conflicting reports from the battle zone, with each side claiming control of strategic areas.

Armenia's Karabakh News Agency said that Armenians in the enclave had forced out Azeri forces from three settlements in the north of the region. It said



Levon Ter-Petrosyan

several dozen Azeris were killed, and five tanks and two armoured personnel carriers destroyed.

Earlier, the Azeri Turan News Agency quoted Azerbaijan's Defence Ministry as saying Armenian forces had suffered heavy losses in the fighting, while Azeri casualties were estimated at about 10 dead and wounded.

The pro-Armenia News Agency said the Nagorno-Karabakh parliament Saturday accepted the resignation of the enclave's government headed by Oleg Yesayan and created a State Defence Committee. It gave no further details.

Worried Republicans gather in Houston to renominate Bush

HOUSTON, Texas (R) — Republicans, worried that their grip on the White House is about to shatter on the rocks of recession, gathered in Houston Sunday to rally round a president who frankly admits that voters have turned on him.

But George Bush says he has enough time, and more than enough determination, to recover from polls showing him far behind Democratic opponent Bill Clinton.

"I am going to win. Nobody believes that, but it's the truth. I am very confident I am going to win," Mr. Bush told Time magazine in a pre-convention interview.

In an interview with Newsweek, the man who once boasted a record 90 per cent popularity rating admitted: "There's a fair amount of evidence that there's frustration with me. But I'm going to turn that around."

The picture is so bleak that a majority of Americans say they no longer think Mr. Bush can handle major crises facing the nation and don't know where he is leading the country.

To win, Mr. Bush must turn the four-day Republican convention starting Monday at the giant AstroDome baseball stadium into a political version of "Operation Desert Storm", the shining moment of his troubled presidency when he rallied the world to overturn the Iraqi conquest of Kuwait.

In a sign of how Mr. Bush's presidency continues to be linked to events in Iraq, the New York Times reported Sunday that the United States and its allies had decided to provoke a confrontation with Iraq Monday morning that could lead to renewed bombing in Baghdad.

The front-page report, quoting unnamed American officials familiar with U.S. planning, said the confrontation would be over

the right of U.N. inspectors to check Baghdad's most closely guarded ministry buildings.

The newspaper said some officials believed the timing was calculated to give Mr. Bush a boost during the convention. The White House has refused to comment directly on the report.

During the four days of the convention, Mr. Bush needs to overcome months of floundering in which he has raised doubts in the minds of millions of voters over whether he has the vision to point the country in the right direction.

Meanwhile, the Democrats — whose party often seems to have a death wish rather than an instinct for victory — have put their house in order and nominated a moderate ticket that seems to be winning friends, influencing voters and turning the Republican convention into "angst at the AstroDome" as one Houston newspaper put it.

Mr. Bush is now faced with essentially the same task he had in 1988 — using his party's convention to virtually reinvent himself in the eyes of millions of voters.

He did it then with an acceptance speech that promised a "kinder, gentler" presidency and made a pledge of "read my lips, no new taxes." That pledge was broken in less than two years, a mistake that Mr. Bush admits and which now haunts him.

Aides hint that Mr. Bush will use his acceptance speech Thursday to promise lower taxes, a politically popular move that could backfire by being regarded as cynical at a time when the budget deficit is at a record high. To help write his speech, Mr. Bush has brought out of retirement Richard Nixon's best speech writer, Ray Price, to forge the words he hopes will reverse some of the worst poll ratings a

sitting president has received in 40 years.

Mr. Clinton has led Mr. Bush by a two-to-one margin in many polls taken since last month's Democratic national convention and a Newsweek poll released Saturday night gave Mr. Clinton a still daunting lead of 53 per cent to 36 per cent for Mr. Bush.

The poll said 58 per cent of Americans disapprove of his handling of the presidency while 36 per cent said they approved.

Add to that yet another poll — this time from ABC and the Washington Post — which said that 61 per cent of Americans said they didn't know where Mr. Bush wanted to take the country and 54 per cent said they thought he was unable to handle the major issues facing the nation.

These are the kind of poll results that drove Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter from office.

Under the pressure of the sagging polls Mr. Bush last week appointed Secretary of State James Baker his chief of staff, making the canny political operative who has been his friend for 35 years into virtually a deputy president.

Mr. Bush is calling in other major party figures to help.

Former President Ronald Reagan will deliver the major opening night speech Monday and is expected to dwell on his administration's role in the decline of communism and bringing the economy out of recession a decade ago.

Mr. Reagan will be preceded by conservative hero Patrick Buchanan, who will endorse the man he tried to defeat in the primaries.

But moderate voters may be alienated by the party's rightwing platform that includes a call for a constitutional ban on abortion, one of the most emotive issues of the campaign.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Geneticist tipped for Congo president

BRAZZAVILLE (R) — Voters went to the polls Sunday for the second round of Congo's presidential elections, with a geneticist tipped as hot favourite for the post. Pascal Lissouba, a 61-year-old scientist and former prime minister, has been confident of victory since winning the backing of the former single party, the Congolese Labour Party (PCT) earlier this week. The PCT's own candidate, incumbent President Denis Sassou-Nguessou, was defeated in last month's first round. The PCT allied itself with Mr. Lissouba, who won just under 36 per cent last time. Mr. Lissouba's rival Bernard Kolelas, who notched 20 per cent in the first round, has won the support of another eliminated candidate — transitional Prime Minister Andre Milongo. But that is unlikely to be enough to push him past Mr. Lissouba, whose Pan-African Union for Social Democracy (UPADS) emerged as the biggest party in parliamentary polls last month. Mr. Milongo lashed out at the PCT-Lissouba alliance this week, saying both sides were determined to destroy the achievements of the national pro-democracy conference which laid the groundwork for these elections last year.

5 missing after Danish plane crash

KARLSTAD, Sweden (R) — A Danish private plane crashed into Lake Vanern in southern Sweden Sunday and five people were feared missing, rescue officials said. Three people were rescued from the lake and taken to hospital but there was no immediate trace of five other people believed to have been on board. The plane, a Piper Navajo, was travelling from Roskilde in Denmark to Karlstad in Sweden when it crashed in the lake, which at that point has a depth of about 20 metres (about 70 feet).

'Afghans being used in Kashmir'

NEW DELHI (R) — An Indian newspaper said Sunday that New Delhi will accuse Pakistan of encouraging Afghan Mujahideen to join a Muslim revolt in disputed Kashmir. The National Herald, mouthpiece of India's ruling Congress Party, said the charge will be made at talks starting Monday between senior officials from the two countries. Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Shahryar Khan and his Indian counterpart J.N. Dixit are due to start two days' talks Monday on normalising relations that have deteriorated sharply over the two-year insurgency in Kashmir. The newspaper quoted Minister of State for External Affairs R.L. Bhatia as saying India had "irrefutable evidence" that Pakistan was trying to sneak Afghan fighters into Kashmir. India and Pakistan have fought three wars — two of them over Kashmir — since both became independent of Britain in 1947. Pakistan denies frequent Indian charges that it arms and trains separatist battling tens of thousands of security forces in Jammu and Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state. Indian officials have said privately for months that Delhi was concerned about Afghan Mujahideen joining a "jihad" (holy war) in Kashmir, after taking power in Afghanistan with the fall of the Communist government in Kabul in April.

4 dead in Miami club shooting

MIAMI (R) — An early-morning shooting spree at a Caribbean restaurant in Miami killed at least four people and injured up to 20 in an incident that may be related to Jamaican drug gangs, police said. The shooting at the restaurant and nightclub Taste Of The Islands, located in a shopping centre north of Miami, occurred at 3:30 a.m. during a birthday party for a woman who was believed to be among the dead, Metro-Dade Police said. Police said witnesses told them at least two gunmen sprang from a restroom and fired repeatedly toward the makeshift dance floor, killing four people and wounding as many as 20, some critically. Most victims ranged in age from 17 to 25. Police said they have not proven a link to violent Jamaican drug gangs known as Pesses, but said two of the injured "were known to be involved in Jamaican Pesses."

Fire burns crater in Siberian oilfield

MOSCOW (R) — Flames shot 60 metres into the air and a deep crater was formed when gas gushing from a bore-hole in the Komsomolsk Oil Field of western Siberia caught fire, Moscow Radio said. It quoted the Russian News Agency (RIA) as saying at the weekend that a major accident had happened at Komsomolsk, in the north of the oil-producing Tyumen region. "A powerful jet of gas gushed from an operational bore-hole and

subsequently caught fire. The tongue of flame reached a height of 60 metres," the report said. "A huge crater was formed in the permafrost of the tundra and the drilling rig collapsed into it." The report quoted a local news agency as saying Saturday that an emergency team was fighting the fire.

U.N. to probe Falkland allegations

LONDON (R) — The British government is expected to order an inquiry into allegations that British soldiers killed Argentine prisoners during the Falklands War in defiance of international conventions, a British newspaper reported. The Independent on Sunday said the Ministry of Defence had confirmed it was studying claims that prisoners were shot by British servicemen during the 1982 conflict over the South Atlantic islands. "There are serious allegations and we are deciding how to respond to them," the newspaper quoted a ministry spokesman as saying. "Allegations of atrocities have been common currency, in army circles since the war ended and the Ministry of Defence has been privately aware of these allegations," the paper said. The ministry declined to discuss details of the incidents under consideration. A 12,000-strong Argentine invasion force surrendered to British marines and paratroops after a 10-week war in which more than 950 men were killed. The Independent on Sunday quoted government sources as saying the present considerations had arisen from allegations made in a book published last year. The book, *Excursion to Hell* by former British Lance Corporal Vincent Bramley alludes to two incidents in which prisoners were shot.

Nearly 2,000 flee Philippine volcano

MANILA (R) — About 2,000 Philippine villagers have fled their homes near Mount Pinatubo after warnings that the volcano, which killed hundreds last year, may erupt again, officials said Sunday. Landslides and mudflows nearly five feet (1.6 metres) high washed out bridges and roads in the northern provinces of Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales after heavy monsoon rains. The Office of Civil Defence said. Villagers living within 15 kilometres of the smoldering volcano sought refuge in government evacuation centres after scientists predicted a possible major eruption, they said. In nearby Angeles City, swamped with volcanic ash by last year's eruption, residents have begun panic buying, officials said. The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said Pinatubo had built a 100-metre (320-foot) dome of lava in the middle of a lake that has formed in its crater.

Strong tremor shakes Colombia

BOGOTA, Colombia (R) — A strong earth tremor shook western Colombia, causing alarm but no injuries or damage, officials and news reports said. The tremor, which lasted between 15 and 20 seconds, was felt across a wide area just after 3 p.m., causing alarm in some towns, news reports said. Jorge Madoza, a technician at the Seismological Observatory of the Southwest, based in the southwestern city of Cali, said the tremor measured 6.0 on the Richter Scale.

Colombian bus burns, 28 killed

BOGOTA (R) — A Colombian bus packed with 42 passengers leaving Bogota for a holiday weekend burst into flames for unknown reasons and 28 people were burned to death, a hospital spokeswoman said. The bus suddenly exploded in flames when it stopped to let off passengers in the small town of Falan, about 150 kilometres northwest of the city, witnesses said. A few people were able to escape by climbing out windows but most of the passengers were burned to death as fire raced through the vehicle, which was reduced to charred wreckage. Authorities were investigating the fire's cause, which was not immediately known. Survivors said the flames broke out in the front of the bus and swept towards the back. Luz Evelia Franco, administrator of the Santa Ana Hospital in Falan, told local radio that 28 people were killed in the disaster.

Rwandan peace talks bog down

DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania (AP) — Negotiations on ending the civil war in Rwanda bogged down over rebel demands for an interim government and amid disputes about what democracy means, the Sunday News reported. The rebels want political change, international inquiry into alleged human rights abuses under Rwanda's President Juvenal Habyarimana, and the automatic right of return for hundreds of thousands of refugees, the newspaper reported.

COLUMN

Elvis fans pay respects at his grave

MEMPHIS (AP) — Thousands of faithful gathered evening at Graceland for a graveside vigil marking the 15th anniversary of Elvis Presley's death. "We just want to be recognised as really good Elvis fans because we love him a lot," said Connie Lee, who came with friends from Lacrosse, Wisconsin. She had waited since early morning. Police estimated 10,000 people were on hand as the candlelight ceremony began. It is the annual highlight of "Elvis International Tribute Week," a string of concerts, dances and Elvis impersonator contests. While the warm-up events often take on a lighter air, the vigil is serious business for the Elvis faithful, who file past his grave. "The sock hops are more for fun, but this is a tribute," said Debbie Sayers of Keyser, West Virginia. Presley, known as the king of rock 'n' roll, was 42 when he died on Aug. 16, 1977, at Graceland, his Memphis mansion. A medical examiner listed the cause of death as heart disease, but court testimony later revealed that Presley was addicted to prescription drugs. He is buried beside his mother, father and paternal grandmother in a small Graceland garden.

Man arrested after 80-year-old mother found living in filth

MAYWOOD, Illinois (AP) — Authorities found an 80-year-old woman suffering from malnutrition and living in filth in the home she shared with her son. The son was charged with abusing her. Dennis Walker was arrested Friday after police entered the home and found it cluttered with debris, feces and animals, including caged and bottled lizards, spiders, rats and mice. His mother, Marcella Walker, was hospitalized. A spokesman said he was not permitted to release her condition. Police said she was suffering from malnutrition. Mr. Walker was charged with battery and abuse of a senior citizen. Bood was set at \$10,000.

'Gentleman bandit' returns to pay for gum

WEST HAVEN, Connecticut (AP) — A robber stole \$40 from a convenience store to pay his rent, but turned down the clerk's offer to take the entire cash drawer and returned a minute later to pay for a pack of gum, police said. Police said the thief put a pack of gum on the counter early Friday and handed the clerk \$1. When the cash drawer opened, he told the clerk not to close it. The clerk asked the man, "Is this a robbery?" and the man demanded \$40, saying it was "in pay the rent," police said. The clerk offered all the money in the drawer, but the robber politely declined and left. While the clerk was calling police, the man returned and asked, "did I pay for the gum?" police said. Kenneth Jeffries, 24, was charged with robbery and was held Saturday on \$5,000 bond.

Officials fail to make costly repairs on Queen Mary

LONG BEACH, California (AP) — The Queen Mary, a former ocean liner now permanently berthed as a tourist attraction, is so rusty it could sink, studies show. But disagreements over who should fix it have delayed repairs. E.D. Allen, a harbour engineer, said the city's Harbour department, which oversees the Queen Mary, has not arranged repairs because it does not consider the corrosion serious. Walt Disney Co., which has operated tours, restaurants, shops and convention services on the ship under a lease with the city since 1986, considers it safe, said spokeswoman Jennifer Blazey. Disney is scheduled to stop operating the attraction at the end of the year. But in a 1990 report, a city port engineer, Edward C. Bermender, warned, "the situation is critical the time for discussions has run out." Mr. Bermender said the hull could leak trapping tourists below decks. He recommended that bulkheads be removed more than 20 years ago to prevent it from sinking. Bulkheads divide the hull into watertight compartments.